STRICTURES

UPON

PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY,

BY

THE REV. DR. KNOWLES,
PREBENDARY OF ELY;

AS ALSO

UPON THE THEOLOGICAL AND POLEMICAL

WRITINGS OF THE

RT. REV. THE LORD BISHOP OF ST. DAVID'S,

THE REV. DR. PRIESTLEY,

AND

THE LATE REV. MR. BADCOCK.

BY JAMES EDWARD HAMILTON, Esq.

PART THE SECOND.

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STRICTURES

ON

DR. PRIESTLEY'S HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH,

AND

MR. GIBBON.

PART THE SECOND.

BEFORE I proceed farther, I perceive it to be indiſpenſably neceſſary that I ſhould clearly define, and make the reader ſenſible of the preciſe theological import of the terms, *Eſſentia*, *Subſtantia*, *Hypoſtaſis*, &c. mentioned in my Preface: as, without this knowledge, it would be impoſſible for him to determine between me and thoſe ingenious and learned writers, whom I propoſe making the chief object of the ſecond part of theſe Strictures. To put theſe terms in the cleareſt light, and at the ſame time to obviate every cavil concerning their preciſe theological meaning, I ſhall apply each of

them to the particular Hereſy againſt which it was originally pointed. This will oblige me to lay before the reader a part of what I have already ſaid in the Preliminary Diſquiſition concerning Heretics; which I ſhall the more readily do, as from my own peruſal of the Fathers, I am enabled to ſpeak with far greater preciſion than I poſſibly could when I was only acquainted with them through the Moderns, not one of whom (except Johannes Garnerius, the learned editor of Marius Mercator, and, perhaps, Montfauçon) appears to me to be at all acquainted with the true import of theſe terms.

I do not think it irrelevant firſt to mention the extent of my reading among the Fathers, which though I acknowledge it to be very limited, yet I am contented to be tried by any other of the Catholic Fathers of the fourth or fifth centuries concerning any diſputed point. For though I perhaps may not have read them myſelf, yet, from the frequent quotations which I have met with in modern writers from, I believe, every one of them, I entertain not the ſmalleſt doubt, but that all the Catholic Fathers of thoſe times make uſe of theſe terms in the very ſame ſenſe.

Of the Fathers, I have carefully perused Eusebius's Ecclesiastical History, and his Life of Constantine the Great; Theodoret's Ecclesiastical History, and Heretical Fables; the Commonitorium of Vincentius Lirinensis; the Sermons of Nestorius; and the Second Part of Marius Mercator, by Johannes Garnerius, which solely refers to the Nestorian Heresy, and which, unless otherwise noticed, is always referred to in this work; also the Auctarium of Theodoret, by the same editor. These two last works, whether of the ancient or of the modern, I esteem invaluable. I have also perused the Epistle of Leo the Great concerning the Eutychian and other Heresies, and have looked through Epiphanius. I have also carefully examined the Ecclesiastical Histories of Socrates and Sozomen; but, being *laymen*, they were unacquainted with the theological import of the terms made use of by contending theologians. Of this the latter more than once gives a hint: but Socrates speaks positively and ignorantly. These writers, therefore, are to be little regarded, when speaking of the peculiar opinions of Heretics, unless when quoting their words, or are supported by Catholic Fathers. But the writers who should be chiefly attended to, are Nestorius,

Cyril of Alexandria, Theodoret, Marius Mercator, and Leo the Great: and, concerning the Hereſies, theſe all ſpeak the ſame language. To ſuch authorities what can be oppoſed even though all the other Fathers held a different language concerning the Hereſies? yet, even in this caſe, with the judicious theſe would kick the beam: but, on the contrary, when, as far as I have noticed them, they all hold the ſame language concerning the Hereſies as thoſe firſt mentioned, can there remain a doubt that the Fathers entertained the ſame ſentiments concerning them? Had they entertained different notions, it would have been quickly remarked: for, in thoſe days, it was not permitted to the Catholic eccleſiaſtics to hold different opinions upon doctrinal points: in ſuch caſes they were obliged to recant, or were depoſed. I have, moreover, looked through the genuine works of Tertullian, and peruſed a little of Cyprian; alſo Origen againſt Celſus, and Juſtin Martyr's Dialogue with Trypho the Jew. But theſe writers, living before the important Hereſies concerning the Trinity ſprung up among the Catholics, can give no information concerning them. However, ſome of the treatiſes of the former are invaluable, for the knowledge which they preſerve to

us of ſome ſingular opinions held by early Chriſtians, and their adverſaries.

To what I have already laid down in the Preliminary Diſquiſition, concerning the different ſects of Gnoſtics, I have nothing material to add; having, in the peruſal of the above-mentioned writers, chiefly confined my attention to what they ſaid of thoſe hereſies which ſprung up among the Catholics themſelves after the middle of the third century. If the reader, therefore, wiſhes to refreſh his memory with reſpect to the peculiar tenets of theſe firſt Heretics, I refer him to what is there ſaid, p. 28, &c.

Sabellius, an African Biſhop, taught, about the year 254, that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, were only three names of *one* Perſon, and of *one* Subſtance, Subſtratum, or Subſiſtence. Thoſe who held this opinion, namely himſelf and Montanus, and their followers, were called *Blaſphemers*; becauſe they denied both the individuate Perſonality and individuate Subſiſtence of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: they were beſides nicknamed *Patripaſſians*, as holding that the Father ſuffered. Euſ. H. E. l. vii. c. 6. Epiph. Hær. 69. Theod. H. E. l. v. c. 11. Ib. H. f. l. ii. c. 9. Marius Mercator, p. 128.

To

To elucidate the terms *Perſon*, *Perſona*, προσωπος, and *Subſiſtence*, *Subſtance*, *Subſtratum*, *Subſtantia*, *Subſiſtentia*, υποστασις, ουσια, let the reader ſuppoſe a dead ſnail to be put before him. This is a *Subſiſtence*, &c. Let him afterwards ſuppoſe it to be endued with a reaſonable ſoul; it will be then both a *Subſiſtence* and a *Perſon*. Let him then ſuppoſe the Deity to be comprehended under the figure of this animated ſnail. Sabellius held, that the Deity made himſelf known to the Jews in the time of Moſes as the Father; and in the time of Jeſus Chriſt by means of a *protenſion* (which may be well conceived as reſembling the horn of a ſnail, when it puts it forth) which poſſeſſed the Man Jeſus Chriſt; and that the Holy Spirit was *another protenſion*, ſimilar to that which poſſeſſed Jeſus Chriſt, but which took poſſeſſion of the Apoſtles at the Feaſt of Pentecoſt ſucceeding the crucifixion.

This ſect is alluded to in the Arrian Creed, Soc. l. ii. c. 19. under the character of thoſe who only held *one* Perſon (προσωπος), by making the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt one thing (πραγμα), or Subſiſtence, under three denominations.

Noetus is mentioned by Epiphanius as maintaining

ing the ſame tenets as thoſe aſcribed to Sabellius. But what he ſays of this Heretic is utterly improbable. Firſt, he obſerves, that he flouriſhed about 130 years before the time that he was writing, which would make him contemporary with Sabellius: and yet, though a little prior in time to this African Biſhop, he *is unnoticed* by the Council, which was convened to examine and condemn the opinion of Sabellius, which is not to be diſtinguiſhed from that of Noetus. 2dly, He obſerves, that he was, together with his aſſociates, expelled by *Preſbyters* from the church, after having been firſt condemned by them. Now, unleſs in this inſtance, it does not appear from Eccleſiaſtical hiſtory that ſuch a power had ever been veſted in *Preſbyters:* and doubtleſs, had ſuch a council of Preſbyters been really convened for ſuch a purpoſe, there would have been frequent alluſions to it either in future Councils or Eccleſiaſtical hiſtorians; but in neither is there one word of the ſort. Epiphanius again obſerves, that Noetus called himſelf Moſes, and his brother Aaron. Such extravagance could only have been the reverie of ſome diſtempered *monaſtic* brain. Euſebius has taken no notice of this Heretic; being probably aware, that his exiſtence reſted ſolely upon

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ſome *Monkiſh* relation which impoſed on Epiphanius. His name, beſides, denotes *intelligence*. The names of *real* perſons among the Greeks, I have obſerved to be very rarely *ſignificative*.

Praxeas towards the cloſe of the ſecond Century taught that "the Father had himſelf deſcended into the Virgin, that He was born of her, that he ſuffered, finally that He was Jeſus Chriſt himſelf," ipſum dicit Patrem deſcendiſſe in Virginem, ipſum ex ea natum, ipſum paſſum, denique ipſum eſſe Jeſum Chriſtum. Tert. ad Praxeam. c. 1. This notion is called by Marius Mercator υιοπαλπρ, p. 129, and, whatever offence it might have given to Tertullian, did not differ much from his own: for Tertullian compares the Trinity to a tree, ſaying that the root, the branch, and the fruit, reſembled the connection and mutual dependance of the three divine Subſiſtences.

Doctor Prieſtley has obſerved that Tertullian's Orthodoxy, inaſmuch as concerned the Trinity, was never diſputed. If it was not, it was owing to the ignorance of his readers concerning the true Catholic faith. The Ancients never allude to Him as a teacher of ſound doctrine; and with good reaſon, for he was evidently unſound in the faith: for in his

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ſecond chapter againſt Praxeas he ſays, ſpeaking of the Trinity; *Tres autem non Statu ſed gradu, nec ſubſtantia ſed forma.* This was denying that each of the divine perſons in the Trinity was a Subſiſtence, or Hypoſtaſis: which is clearly heretical. But what is ſtill more important, this paſſage ſhews that the term Subſtantia ſignified *individuate Subſiſtence, Subſtratum,* or *Subſtance,* ſo early as the latter end of the 2d century.

Marcellus, Biſhop of Ancyra in Galatia, maintained, about the year 330, that the *Protenſions* of Sabellius, inſtead of having been drawn into the Subſiſtence of the Deity, from which they were protended, *after* the crucifixion and apoſtolic age, *continued protended,* and *will continue ſo until* the conſummation of the will of the Father concerning his creature Man: but upon its accompliſhment, that they will *merge* into the Subſiſtence of the Father, and never afterwards have a peculiar Subſiſtence or Perſonality of their own. He beſides held, that theſe Protenſions were endued with intelligent principles, *diſtinct* from that of the Father: and contended, that he did not deny the Subſiſtences of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, by maintaining the *continued* Protenſion of the two latter from the Subſiſtence of the Father, and

which were therefore properly Subsistences. But the Catholic Fathers, to cut off this subterfuge, determined, that the Subsistences of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, were each of them *Enupostatos* *, (ενυποστατος) or distinct, separated, Subsistences. Therefore an anathema was pronounced against any person who denied that the Subsistence of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, were not each of them *Enupostatos*. This discovered a quibbling Marcellian: as did also the pronouncing an anathema against whoever denied that the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, was υποστατος, or *subsistential*, a quibbling Sabellian. For, on account of the quirks and mental reservations of the different Heretics, it was discovered by the Catholics, that there was no other effectual mode to unkennel them, but pronouncing an anathema, or sending to the Devil whoever held the heretical opinion which was suspected: the anathema to be pronounced by the Heretic himself.

Marcellus advanced another heretical opinion, namely, that the Personality and Subsistency of the Son, and Holy Spirit, *commenced* at the incarnation of the

* Enupostatos and Upostatos have no other difference than that the first more strongly marks individuate Subsistence.

Word,

Word, and the deſcent of the Holy Spirit at the Pentecoſt. To ſtigmatize this tenet, the Catholics introduced a *new theological* term, Prouparko (προυπαρχω), which ſignifies Pre-exiſtence both with regard to Subſiſtence and Perſonality: which ſignifications its derivative, Uparxis (υπαρξις), alſo retains. See Marius Mercator, p. 136, 184, 204. Doctor Prieſtley has rendered Uparxis by the term Subſtance. This is a very favourite term with the moderns. I wiſh however that the Doctor, or ſome other of them, had defined it. For what I have here mentioned concerning Marcellus, ſee Socr. l. ii. c. 19. Sor. l. ii. c. 33. Epiph. p. 826. Thdrt. H. f. l. ii. c. 10. Chryſ. 3. Hom. in ep. ad. Hæb.

Photinus, about the year 348, taught that the Word had a Subſiſtence, and that, in a *peculiar* manner, it inhabited or externally adhered to Jeſus, who was begotten, as other men are, of Mary, and that by its agency the miracles recorded in the Goſpels were performed. Marius Mercator p. 129. p. 128. Vincentius Lirinenſis comm. p. 333. Thdrt. H. f. l. ii. c. 11.

Paul of Samoſate, Biſhop of Antioch, about the year 264, taught that the Word of God was like the Word of man, or Anupoſtatos (ανυποστατος,) that is, with-

out Subſiſtence; or like air, according to Philaſter: but that this Word dwelt in a peculiar manner in the man Jeſus: whom he alſo held to have been a *mere* man begotten as other men: which was Marcellus' ſentiment alſo. The followers of theſe three Heretics were nicknamed Homuncionites by the Catholics. Marius Mercator, p. 128. Euſ. H. E. l. vii. c. 2. Socr. l. ii. c. 19. Epiph. p. 608. Thdrt. H. f. l. ii. c. 8.

The next Hereſy which I ſhall notice is that of Neſtorius Biſhop of Conſtantinople, who held, 428, that the Word, though joined to Jeſus, nay though it was even united to him, yet ſtill that the Union was not of ſo intimate a nature, as that the two Subſiſtences, namely of the Man, and of the Logos, or God-Word, conſtituted but *one Subſiſtence*, as the Catholics taught; who named this mode of union *the Union according to the Subſiſtence*, which is improperly rendered by the moderns the *Hypoſtatical Union*. Neſtorius maintained, that, as the Subſiſtences were two *before* the Union, they continued two *after* the Union. It was for this reaſon that the Catholics objected to him his holding *two* Sons, and *two* Chriſts: Ep. iii. Sti. Cyrilli ad Neſt.

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No. 15, and Marius Mercator p. 119. He agreed, however, with the Catholics, in confeſſing that the *Word* was united or joined to the fleſh in Mary *at the moment of Conception*; that it paſſed through her, together with the fleſh, but, nevertheleſs, that it was not born of Mary. For, as he obſerved, how could that, which had ſubſiſted from Eternity, be born of her who was but of yeſterday? He alſo confeſſed, that the Word took up the entire Man, that is, the body with a reaſonable Soul. In a word, the only points in which he differed from the Catholics were, the denying *the Union according to the Subſiſtence*—that the Word was *twice* born—and that the Word was not entitled to the appellation of *Son of God*, until after the birth of the man Jeſus; to whom being joined, the reſult was according to him the Son of God, or Chriſt.

Thoſe unconverſant in theological diſcuſſions will doubtleſs be not a little ſurprized, at being informed that, notwithſtanding the differences in the opinions of theſe four laſt-mentioned Heretics, they ſhould be coupled together by the Fathers, as maintaining the ſame opinion of Jeſus Chriſt, namely, that he was a mere man. However this may appear to the Reader, I cannot ſay that any thing ever appeared to me more

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unaccountable than the uniform language of the Fathers in this reſpect; but the difficulty was preſently ſolved, when I had diſcovered the meaning of the *Union according to the Subſiſtence*. For, as theſe Heretics denied this Union, it followed, that the Word might be totally taken away, and the man ſtill remain. But upon the Catholic ſyſtem this was impoſſible. For the Catholics, by uniting the Subſiſtences of the Man and the Word, in ſuch a manner as to form only *one* Subſiſtence and Perſon, as the Soul and Body, though two Subſiſtences, are ſo united in Man, as to form but one Subſiſtence, which, without the deſtruction of the Man, cannot afterwards be ſeparated; ſo, by virtue of *the union according to the Subſiſtence*, neither could the God-Word be ſeparated from the entire Man, without deſtroying the Subſiſtence, and Perſon, of Chriſt. Neſtorius alſo held with the Catholics, that the Divine and Human Subſiſtences would never be again diſunited. This, however, was not a neceſſary conſequence of his principles, as he denied that they formed *one* Subſiſtence and *one* Perſon; but rather ſeems to have been advanced by him to maintain ſome little popularity than to be the ſerious dictate of conviction.

Arius,

Arius, about the year 318, advanced a new opinion concerning the Word, namely, that it was created by God, *out of nothing*, and, conſequently, was not *eternal*. To confute this notion, the Catholics determined at the council of Nice, which was aſſembled by Conſtantine the Great, chiefly on account of this hereſy, that the Father, and Word, or Son, were Homoouſios, or Conſubſtantial, that is, *of one Subſiſtence, Subſtratum*, or *Subſtance*. It hence followed, that whoever affirmed that the Father and Son were Homoouſios, at the ſame time affirmed that the Son was *eternal*, and *not created*. For if he was *of one Subſiſtence* with the Father, as the Subſiſtence of the Father was by all held to be eternal, the Subſiſtence of the Son muſt have been eternal alſo.

The Term Homoouſios had been long in uſe among Chriſtians before the council of Nice: but after this council it was taken in a different ſenſe. Prior to it, it ſignified *ſimilar individuated Subſiſtence*; as a Man's Son is ſaid to be of a ſimilar Subſiſtence with his father. Manes, therefore, for teaching that the Son was Homoouſios with God, and a *part* of his Subſiſtence, Epiph. p. 732, was charged by the Catholics with teaching *two* Gods. But according to

the meaning affixed to this term by the Nicæan Fathers, it implied, that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, were ſo united as to form only *one Subſiſtence*, Ouſia (ουσια), though each in itſelf was a diſtinct Subſiſtence, υπο αστις*. The Arians, on account of this tenet of the Catholics, charged them with maintaining the obnoxious doctrine of Sabellius, or *one Subſiſtence*, Ouſia: which, when denied by the Catholics, who affirmed that they held the Subſiſtences (Hypoſtaſes), of the Father, and of the Son, to be diſtinct, or two; the Sabellians then charged them with holding more Gods than *one*. To repel this charge, the Catholics affirmed, that though they held *three* Subſiſtences, (Hypoſtaſes), yet by maintaining they were Homoouſios, they were ſo united as to be only *one Subſiſtence*, or Ouſia. Hence it follows, that the term Homoouſios implied an Union and a Separation *at the ſame time*. And that this is its true theological import,

* Hence it follows, that Hypoſtaſis was the *Subſtratum* of each of the Divine Perſons; and that *Ouſia* was the *Subſtratum* of the Trinity, or God: by which appellation it (the Trinity) is ſometimes diſtinguiſhed by the Fathers of the fifth century. This diſtinction, however, was unknown to Origen, either as it regarded the Divine Perſons or Human Soul, as will appear by comparing pages 156, 170, 171, 292 of his Treatiſe againſt Celſus. ed. Spencer.

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appears evident from what Fulgentius, Baſil, and Gregory Nazienzen ſay, quoted in the firſt part of theſe Strictures, p. 140, which the reader is requeſted to examine, where they obſerve that Orthodoxy conſiſted in neither "removing ſo far aſunder the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as to be ſeparated; nor ſo cloſely uniting them as to circumſcribe them within one Perſon." This double uſe of the term Homoouſios was of ſuch ſervice to the Catholics in their controverſies, that it was affirmed by them, that its true meaning had been *revealed* to Athanaſius.

The great uſefulneſs of this term in controverſy will ſtill farther appear by obſerving, that as the Arians held, that the Word was made *out of nothing*, it followed, that if the Word was God, as they alſo maintained, that then they taught two Gods: for between Creator, and Creature, it was impoſſible, that ſuch an intimate union could ſubſiſt, as that they ſhould form only one Subſiſtence or be Homoouſios*. And that the Arians were fully ſenſible of this difficulty, appears very clear from their confeſſions of faith, or creeds, in which they maintain that the

* See Pope Leo's Letter concerning the Eutychian and other Hereſies.

Son was *ſo cloſely* united to the Father, that there was no ſenſible interval between them. Socr. l. ii. c. 19. But the Catholics had too much experience of Arian equivocation to accept of any confeſſion, in which the term Homoouſios was not included; as neceſſarily implying both *Unity* of Subſiſtence, and *Eternity*, with the Father; for the Arians equally quibbled concerning the Eternity. Socr. ib.

This peculiar meaning of the term Homoouſios will appear ſtill more evident as we proceed. However, if the reader will look back to p. 49 of the Preliminary Diſquiſition, he will be very ſenſible, from the language of Hilary, of the difficulties under which the Catholics ſtruggled, leſt in treating of ſuch a nice ſubject, they ſhould touch upon either of the quick-ſands; namely, *the joining together*, or *ſeparating* the divine Subſiſtencies.

About the middle of the fourth century, Apolinaris of Laodicea advanced a new opinion; namely, that the Word brought down fleſh from heaven, or was converted, or changed into fleſh in heaven, in which ſtate it paſſed through Mary: denying, that Jeſus Chriſt had any *anima*, the Word anſwering in its

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ſtead*. But upon its being objected to him, that if this were the fact, that then the *unchangeable* God Word muſt have *ſuffered*, Jeſus Chriſt having been ſenſible to the wants of humanity, he abandoned a part of his ſyſtem, acknowledging that the *anima* was a component part of Jeſus Chriſt. The Arians however, holding the Word to be a creature, and, of courſe, capable of *ſuffering*, adopted this notion, which they ever after maintained. Though Apolinaris himſelf had retracted a part of what he had advanced, yet the majority of his followers held his original doctrine. On this account they acquired the appellation of Synouſiaſts, or *Confounders of the Subſiſtencies*. For, as man was ſuppoſed by the Ancients to be ſenſible of external impreſſions, becauſe of the Soul being *diffuſed* or *mingled* through the body: ſo, in like manner, if Jeſus Chriſt had no anima, it would follow, that, as he had been ſenſible of external impreſſions, the God Word muſt have been *diffuſed*, or *mingled*, through his body. Hence it is that we meet with the phraſes of *confounding*, *confuſing*, and *mingling* of the Subſiſtencies, in the Fathers, allu-

* Marius Mercator, p. 129. Epiph. Hær. 77. Vincentius Lirinenſis comm.

ding to this herefy: phraſes unknown before Apolinaris, though applied by later writers to the Sabellians; and for the *ſame* reaſon. Epiph. Hær. lxii. ſ. 3.

I ſhall now attempt to define ſome other terms, which appear to me not to be accurately underſtood by the Moderns.

Φυσις, *natura, nature.* This term ſignifies pure, ſimple, uncompounded, Subſiſtence: as, for example, man was ſaid to be compoſed of *two* natures, body and ſoul: and, as the Ancients alſo held, that man was *one* Subſiſtence, compoſed of *two* Subſiſtencies, body and ſoul, it follows, that nature with them muſt mean a ſingle Subſiſtence. The Ancients, when they intended to point out the entire man by this term, qualified it with the term *perfect*, ſo that *perfect nature* ſignified the entire man. But there was no need of this qualifying term with regard to the perſons of the Godhead, for each of them being a pure, ſimple, uncompounded Subſiſtence, was completely deſignated by φυσις, or nature alone. Marius Mercator, p. 58. No. v.—p. 72. No. ix. p. 271.

Προσωπος, *perſona, perſon,* ſignifies the reſult of the union

union of the ſoul and body, and not the intelligent principle only, as generally underſtood by the Moderns. This term, when applied to Jeſus Chriſt, ſignifies the reſult of the Union of the entire man, and the God-Word *. The Ancients, therefore, were not ſo abſurd as the Moderns are pleaſed to imagine, in maintaining that Jeſus Chriſt had only *one* perſon, yet *two* wills: for it would be very ſtrange indeed, if the *finite* ſoul of a Man, and the *infinite* God-Word, were comprehended in *one* Subſiſtence, that it ſhould not have had *two* wills.

I have obſerved that φυσις, natura, ſignifies pure, ſimple, and uncompounded Subſiſtence. This was its meaning among the Conſtantinopolitan, and Aſiatic, Greeks. But at Alexandria this term was ſynonymous with Hypoſtaſis; and was uſed by the Alexandrian Greeks to ſignify compounded, as well as uncompounded, Subſiſtencies. It was this double meaning of which Eutyches took advantage; and which contributed very much to extend his hereſy, and to render it invincible againſt the powers of Catholiciſm. For, after Cyril's victory over Neſtorius

* Vinceptius Lirinenſis Comm.

at

at Epheſus, his learning was univerſally acknowledged, and his fame very high among his countrymen, who, as ever happens among mankind, attached themſelves to the cauſe, or what they preſumed to be the cauſe, of their countryman. Cyril then having maintained that the two Subſiſtencies, namely, the Man, and God-Word, were united *according to the Subſiſtence* (Hypoſtaſis), in ſuch a manner that after the Union they were only *one Subſiſtence* (Phyſis), thus changing his term, though uſing it, as the Alexandrian Greeks did, in the ſame ſenſe as Hypoſtaſis. For he affirmed, that this union reſembled that of the ſoul and body in man, and that man was only one Subſiſtence. Eutyches, I ſay, taking advantage of his changing his term, maintained, that the Word was *changed* into fleſh in heaven, and in that ſtate had paſſed through Mary: moreover affirming, that in this he ſaid nothing more than Cyril himſelf; who taught, that there were *two* Subſiſtencies (Hypoſtaſes) before the Union, but only *one* Subſiſtence (Phyſis) after it: and in this, as far as ſound went, he was very right: but Cyril's *one* Subſiſtence (Phyſis) intended a Subſiſtence compounded

of

of three Subſiſtencies, namely, the God-Word, the Soul, and the Body: whereas the Subſiſtence (Phyſis) of Eutyches, who was a Conſtantinopolitan Monk, intended an *un*compounded Subſiſtence (for this was the import of the term Phyſis among the Aſiatic Greeks), the God-Word being, according to him, *changed* into body, ſo that the reſult was a pure, uncompounded Subſiſtence, or Nature. His followers were called Monophyſites, which ſignifies *one nature*.

This hereſy places in a very ſtrong light, the folly of an ignorant, ungovernable, populace. For the Egyptians, ignorant of the point in queſtion, embraced with the wildeſt and moſt abſurd fanaticiſm, through prepoſſeſſion for their favourite and countryman Cyril, an opinion the *direct oppoſite* of that which Cyril himſelf had taught, being completely impoſed upon by the *ſound* of a word: nor to this hour have they diſcovered their error. From what Mr. Gibbon has ſaid concerning this hereſy, it is plain, that he alſo, or rather the Moderns, whom he follows, were impoſed on, in like manner, by ſound. However, at the council of Chalcedon, aſſembled 451, on account of this hereſy, it was determined,

that

that there were *two natures*, that is, Subsiſtencies, in Jeſus Chriſt, and only *one perſon*. This one perſon was againſt Neſtorius, or rather Theodoret, who, for many years after the condemnation of Neſtorius, had, by denying the Union *according to the Subſiſtence*, in effect maintained, according to the Catholics and to truth, two perſons (the God-Word and Man) in Jeſus Chriſt.

I ſhall here recapitulate what I have juſt ſaid reſpecting ſome of thoſe technico-theological terms.

Ουσια, υποστασις, *Eſſentia*, *Subſtantia*, *Subſiſtentia* ſignify Subſiſtence. Ouſia peculiarly means the Subſiſtence of God, the Divinity, or Trinity. Hypoſtaſis, the Subſiſtence of the Father, or Son, or Holy Spirit. Hær. f. l. iv. c. 8. The Latin terms are merely ſynonimes.

Υποστατος, Subſtantialis, Subſtantivus, ſignify having a Subſiſtence.

Ενυποστατος, is rendered by Montfaucon by *per ſe ſubſiſtens*, Chryſ. iii. Hom. in ep. ad Hæb.; but it is not expounded by Marius Mercator, who tranſfers the Greek term into the Latin text, p. 158, 183. Montfaucon's rendering, however, I apprehend cannot be diſputed: and, as already obſerved, this

term

term was probably invented againſt the Hereſy of Marcellus, who by maintaining that the Protenſions continued protended, perhaps affirmed, that he held, as well as the Catholics, the three Subſiſtences; but *Subſiſtentia per ſe* precluded this quibble.

Ανυποστατος, evidently ſignifies *without Subſiſtence*: and is applicable to the opinion of Paul of Samoſate, who denied that the Word had any Subſiſtence; however, neither is this term expounded by Marius Mercator, ib.

There are two other phraſes which ſtill remain to be explained, namely *erring by exceſs*, and *erring by defect*. The firſt is predicated of Sabellius, and Marcellus, becauſe they joined too cloſely the *divine* Subſiſtences; and alſo of the Arians, and Apolinariſts, becauſe they joined too cloſely the divine and *human* Subſiſtences. *Erring by defect* is predicated of Arius, becauſe he ſeparated too far aſunder the *divine* Subſiſtences: and alſo of Neſtorius, for ſeparating too far aſunder the *divine* and *human* Subſiſtences *.

I have obſerved, that Cyril maintained that the union of the God Word with the entire man reſem-

* See Part I. p. 140.

bled that which takes place between the ſoul and body; but ſtill he did not hold that it was *preciſely* the ſame. This would have been *mingling the Subſiſtences:* as the God Word muſt then, like the ſoul, have been *mingled* through the human body. Hence it follows, that *the Union according to the Subſiſtence* fell ſomehow ſhort of that which took place between the ſoul and body. Therefore the rendering ενωσις καθ υποστασιν the *Hypoſtatical Union*, is an intenſion of, or ſaying more than the original. Cyril, though he frequently varies this phraſe, yet never puts καθ υποστασιν adjectively; doubtleſs being aware, that his opponents would not have failed to object againſt him the *mingling of the Subſiſtences:* nor, for the ſame reaſon, does he put it adverbially. This no doubt is a very nice point, and would, I apprehend, have eſcaped modern critics: however the Antients failed not to notice it. Marius Mercator, p. 48. n.

Again, the Catholics objecting againſt the Apolinariſts the *erring by exceſs*, or of uniting too cloſely the divine and human Subſiſtences; as alſo againſt the Neſtorians and Humaniſts the erring *by defect*, or ſeparating too far aſunder the divine and human Subſiſtences;

ſiſtences; it neceſſarily follows, that their *union according to the Subſiſtence* was a medium betwixt theſe extremes: and therefore it may be properly denominated the *younger brother* of the Homoouſios, as affirming an union, and a ſeparation of the *divine* and *human* Subſiſtences *at the ſame time*. The true import of the phraſe, *Union according to Hypoſtaſis*, was alſo ſaid by the Catholics, to have been *revealed* to Cyril: and that of free will, ſo as not to impugn the preſcience of God, to Auguſtine. However, there are many Moderns that, with reſpect to this laſt, think it may be eaſily accounted for on the principles of human reaſon. I am inclined to think, that the Ancients, by their mode of ſolution, give no ſmall proof of their judgment.

Garnerius alſo obſerves, that the *Union according to the Subſiſtence*, was a *medium* between the opinion of Neſtorius and Eutyches; which confirms what is advanced in the preceding paragraph.

Pope Leo obſerves, in his Letter concerning the Eutychian, and other hereſies, that the myſteries of the Catholic faith were not capable of being expreſſed

* Auctarium Thdrt. p. 525. No. V.

in words, nor of being repreſented by any thing in nature. The reader, I doubt not, is fully ſenſible of the truth of the obſervation.

The Reader will ſurely conclude, that if there were any perſons of common ſenſe in thoſe days, that theſe abſurd notions of the Catholics and Heretics could not fail to excite their keeneſt ridicule: nor will he be miſtaken in making this inference: however, to ſtop the current of their adverſaries wit, the Catholics took care not to publiſh, or publicly avow thoſe extraordinary, and out-of-the-way notions, except in their controverſies with *Chriſtian* Theologians. For Sozomen, as already obſerved, hints at ſome hidden meaning which was perhaps unknown to himſelf.* In this paſſage he alſo ſpeaks concerning the *propriety* of diſcloſing too much of thoſe tenets which were only known to the initiated and prieſts. Euſebius againſt Marcellus ſays†, "the cuſtom of the church does not "allow thoſe perſons who would have a mind to diſcuſs, "to doubt, or to queſtion, whether the only begotten "Son of God WAS, and had PRE-EXISTED."

Further, Socrates affirms, that Neſtorius did not

* L. i. c. 20. † P. 5. A.

ſay

ſay that Jeſus Chriſt was a mere man; nor that his opinion concerning Jeſus Chriſt reſembled that of Paul of Samoſate, and Photinus: which aſſertion exhibits his ignorance of the *Union according to the Subſiſtence*, unleſs we ſhould allow him greater knowledge in theſe matters, than Leo the Great, Cyril, Marius Mercator, and Celeſtine, Biſhop of Rome, poſſeſſed. But what ſhews beyond diſpute this reſerve of the Catholics in avowing their tenets, is the tract of the *learned* Theodoret againſt the Anomoeans, which begins in this manner. "*Anomoean.* Are you a Chriſ-"tian?—*Orthodox.* Certainly.—*An.* What is Chriſ-"tianity?—*Orth.* To confeſs the former was my duty, "but to ſay what this is, unſafe.—*An.* For what "reaſon?—*Orth.* Becauſe it is my duty to ſay that "I am a ſervant of Chriſt; but to ſay what is Chriſ-"tianity, unſafe, unleſs I knew who it is that interro-"gates; *that I may not be found throwing holy things be-"fore dogs, and pearls before ſwine.* Again, if you aſk "me, if I am one of the *faithful*, or a *Catechumen*, I "ſhall readily ſay what I am: but if you aſk what it "is to be one of the faithful, I anſwer not, leſt the in-"terrogator ſhould perchance be a *Jew*." The dialogue

proceeds

proceeds till the Orthodox is ſatisfied that his adverſary is a Chriſtian, when they proceed fairly to diſcuſs their differences. This paſſage ſhews, that they were *Jews* who chiefly amuſed themſelves in ridiculing *Chriſtian* tenets. Farther, Origen, in his tract againſt Celſus, admits, p. 7. "that certain myſteries were not communicated to all Chriſtians.—That there were external and internal doctrines"—and p. 99, "that there were *vulgar* believers, and believers who had made a *greater* proficiency—p. 148. that there were *Catechumens* and *Godly*. Hence it appears that the Chriſtians kept the knowledge of their myſteries carefully among the *faithful*. For that an eſſential difference ſubſiſted between the faithful, and Catechumens, is evident, independently of what Origen ſays, from the paſſage cited from Theodoret; and which, it ſeems, ſubſiſted from the earlieſt accounts of Chriſtianity to his time, which was four centuries after Chriſt: for otherwiſe we can hardly ſuppoſe that Celſus, who preceded Origen almoſt a century, ſhould make it one of his objections againſt the Chriſtians, when it might be very eaſily diſproved. It alſo appears evident from this

this paſſage of Theodoret, as well as from what Socrates ſays concerning the terms Homoouſios, Hypoſtaſis, that Chriſtian *laymen*, who, I preſume, were for the moſt part only Catechumens, were not initiated into the myſterious meaning of thoſe technico-theological terms, as I may well call them. I therefore apprehend that the Chriſtians, may be well compared to Free Maſons, who frequently make uſe of common terms, but in a ſenſe entirely diſtinct from vulgar acceptation, ſo that the uninitiated are ſtrangers to what they ſay.

I recollect to have met with ſomewhere in Lardner a ſimilar confeſſion made by one of the Fathers, which he contended ſhould not be literally received. At the time I thought the learned Doctor's reaſoning in ſupport of his opinion was very inconcluſive. What has been juſt laid before the reader proves that it was ſo.

In conformity with the juſtly-approved practice of the Moderns, I have ſubjoined my authorities: but leſt many readers ſhould be deterred by their number from conſulting them, I ſhall here obſerve, that in a couple of days cloſe ſtudy any perſon, having a moderate

a moderate knowledge of the Greek and Latin languages, may ſatisfy himſelf concerning what has been here laid down reſpecting the Hereſies, and the theological terms which I have attempted to explain, by reading the ſecond part of Marius Mercator, ed. Johannes Garnerius. I mean that part of it only which contains the twelve very ſhort ſermons of Neſtorius, and Mercator's Strictures upon them: together with Cyril's three Letters to Neſtorius; and the defences of his twelve capitula, or anathemas, againſt Andreas Samoſatenus and Theodoret. But if he will read the entire ſecond Part, he will, I promiſe him, if curious in theological diſquiſitions, be amply rewarded for his trouble. But as I apprehend, that this work is not very common, he will be able to form a tolerable good judgment upon the points in diſcuſſion by only peruſing the Commonitorium of Vincentius Lirinenſis, which can be done in two or three hours. However, for the further ſatisfaction of ſome of my readers, I ſhall make a couple of extracts from this writer, which will ſhew that my explication of ſome

of

of the terms is well founded: and at the ſame time prove the abſurdity of that of ſome celebrated moderns.

Vincentius Lirinenſis, ſpeaking of the right faith concerning God the Father, and the Son, ſays, *In Deo una ſubſtantia, ſed tres perſonæ: in Chriſto duæ Subſtantiæ, ſed una perſona. In Trinitate alius atque alius, non aliud atque aliud: in Salvatore aliud atque aliud, non alius atque alius.* Subſtantia is the Latin for Hypoſtaſis, which, when the moderns venture to expound (for they ſometimes put down the Greek term, Hypoſtaſis, in common characters, which is not expounding), it is by the term *perſon*; therefore, agreeably to this expoſition, the term Subſtantia in the above paſſage ſhould be rendered Perſon: according to this ingenious conjecture, the paſſage will run thus; "In God there is *one* perſon, but *three* perſons; "in Chriſt *two* perſons, but *one* perſon. In the Tri- "nity there is another [perſon] and another [perſon], "not another [perſon] and another [perſon]: in the "Saviour there is another [perſon] and another [per- "ſon], not another [perſon] and another [perſon]." What nonſenſe! but let it be properly rendered, and

the paſſage is clear enough: for he ſays, "In God "there is one Subſiſtence, but three Perſons: in Chriſt "two Subſiſtences, but one Perſon. In the Trinity "there is another [perſon] and another [perſon], not "another [Subſiſtence] and another [Subſiſtence]: in "the Saviour there is another [Subſiſtence] and another "[Subſiſtence], not another [perſon] and another "[perſon]." He goes on, "How is there another "[perſon] and another [perſon] in the Trinity, not "another [Subſiſtence] and another [Subſiſtence]? "Becauſe there is one perſon of the Father, another of "the Son, and another of the Holy Spirit; but, never-"theleſs, of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit [*i. e.* the "Trinity], there is not another and another [Subſiſtence], "but one and the ſame Subſiſtence [natura]. How in "the Saviour is there another [Subſiſtence] and another "[Subſiſtence], not another [perſon] and another "[perſon]? Becauſe there is one Subſiſtence of the Deity, "and another of the Humanity: but nevertheleſs, "Deity and Humanity are not another [perſon] and "another [perſon], but one and the ſame Chriſt, one "and the ſame Son of God, and one and the ſame "perſon of the one and the ſame Chriſt and Son of "God."

"God." *Quomodo in Trinitate alius atque alius, non aliud atque aliud. Quia ſcilicit alia eſt perſona Patris, alia Filii, alia Spiritus Sancti, ſed tamen Patris, Filii, et Spiritus Sancti non alia et alia ſed una eademque natura: Quomodo in Salvatore aliud atque aliud, non alius atque alius? Quia videlicet, altera Subſtantia divinitatis, alia humanitatis: ſed tamen Deitas et humanitas non alter et alter, ſed unus idemque Chriſti, unus idemque filius Dei, et unius ejuſdemque Chriſti et filii Dei una eademque perſona.* The reader will obſerve that *aliud*, the relative to Subſtantia, being in the neuter gender, ſhews, that Subſtantia does not neceſſarily infer intelligence: moreover, that *God* is clearly diſtinguiſhed from the *Father*; the latter having only *one* perſon, whereas God has *three**. God or the Trinity alſo has only *one* Subſiſtence, equally as the Father, and as the Son, and as the Holy Spirit; this ſhews, that theſe three Subſiſtences of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit were ſomehow united, ſo as to form but one Subſiſtence; which was done by predicating them to be Homoouſios; or that they were *one* and *many* at the ſame time. It is alſo evident from the above paſſage that God and Trinity were equivalent terms. Lirinenſis proceeds, "As in man the

* See page 33.

" fleſh is one thing, and the ſoul another; but the ſoul
" and fleſh is one and the ſame man. In Peter and Paul
" the ſoul is one thing, the fleſh another: nevertheleſs
" the fleſh and ſoul of Peter are not two: nor is the
" ſoul one Paul, and the fleſh another Paul; but one
" and the ſame Peter, and one and the ſame Paul, ſub-
" ſiſting of the different twofold Subſiſtence of ſoul
" and body. Thus therefore there are two Subſiſtences
" in one and the ſame Chriſt: one divine, the other
" human: one of God the Father, the other of the
" Virgin Mother, one co-eternal and equal to the
" Father; the other not eternal and inferior to the
" Father: one of the ſubſiſtence of the Father, the
" other of the Subſiſtence of the Mother: nevertheleſs one
" and the ſame Chriſt in the twofold Subſiſtence: there-
" fore there is not one Chriſt God, another man; one
" uncreated, another created; one impaſſible, another
" paſſible; one equal to the Father, another inferior
" to the Father; one of the Father, another of the
" Mother; but one and the ſame Chriſt God and Man;
" the ſame uncreated and created; the ſame unchange-
" able and impaſſible; the ſame changeable and paſſible;
" the ſame equal and inferior to the Father; the ſame
" begotten before all ages of the Father, the ſame

" begotten

" begotten (generated) of the Mother within the " age; perfect God, perfect Man." *Sicut in homine aliud caro, et aliud anima; ſed unus idemque homo anima et caro. In Petro et Paulo aliud anima, aliud caro: nec tamen duo, Petri caro et anima; aut alter Paulus anima, et alter caro: ſed unus idemque Petrus, unus idemque Paulus, ex duplici diverſa ſubſiſtens animi corporiſque natura. Ita igitur in uno eodemque Chriſto duæ ſubſtantiæ ſunt; ſed una divina altera humana; una ex Patre Deo, altera ex matre Virgine; una coæterna et aequalis Patri, altera ex tempore et minor Patre; una conſubſtantialis Patri, altera conſubſtantialis matri; unus tamen idemque Chriſtus in utraque ſubſtantia. Non ergo alter Chriſtus Deus, alter homo; non alter increatus, alter creatus; non alter impaſſibilis, alter paſſibilis; non alter aequalis Patri, alter minor Patre; non alter ex Patre, altera ex matre; ſed unus idemque Chriſtus Deus et homo; idem non creatus, et creatus; idem incommutabilis et impaſſibilis; idem commutatus et paſſus; idem Patri et aequalis et minor; idem ex Patre ante ſecula genitus, idem ſeculo ex matre generatus; perfectus Deus, perfectus homo.*

Farther, he ſays, " Bleſſed Catholic church which " worſhips one God in the fulneſs of the Trinity, and

" alſo

"alſo the equality of the Trinity in one divinity;
"ſo that neither the *oneneſs* of Subſiſtence confounds
"the *diſtinction* of the Perſons; nor in like manner
"the *ſeparation* of the Trinity *divides* the *oneneſs* of the
"Deity. Bleſſed church, I ſay, which confeſſes two true
"and perfect ſubſiſtences in Chriſt, but that the perſon
"of Chriſt is one [Subſiſtence] ſo that neither the
"ſeparation of the ſubſiſtences divides the oneneſs of
"the Perſon, nor in like manner the oneneſs of the
"Perſon confounds the diſtinction of the ſubſiſtences."
Beata vero eccleſia quæ unum Deum in Trinitatis plenitudine et item Trinitatis aequalitatem in una divinitate veneratur; ut neque ſingularitas ſubſtantiæ perſonarum confundat proprietatem, neque item Trinitatis diſtinctio unitatem ſeparat deitatis. Beata, inquam, eccleſia, quæ in Chriſto duas veras perfectaſque ſubſtantias, ſed unum Chriſti credit eſſe perſonam; ut neque naturarum diſtinctio unitatem perſonæ dividat, neque item perſonæ unitas differentiam confundat ſubſtantiarum.

Theſe paſſages I apprehend fully prove my definitions of the terms *ſubſtantia*, *perſona*, *natura* to be well founded: and at the ſame time ſhew how much they have been miſtaken by the moderns.

Now

Now I aſk, is it poſſible not to feel indignation on finding the term *learned* connected with the names of many celebrated moderns for two or three centuries paſt, who, inſtead of candidly acknowledging their ignorance of the theological import of the above terms, make uſe of them like parrots; that is, without having any ideas which the ſounds expreſſed, or falſe ones: but who, on the contrary, tax the ancients with ignorance, with not underſtanding the firſt principles of logic, with contradictions and abſurdities? Whereas theſe imputations, together with a confounded want of modeſty, juſtly rebound againſt themſelves: for, till they underſtood their author, they might have ſpared their criticiſms. From this cenſure I muſt except Garnerius the learned editor of Marius Mercator, and, perhaps, Montfauçon: however, not having his edition of Chryſoſtom, I cannot ſpeak poſitively.

I moreover affirm, that the true Catholic faith has been loſt for ſeveral centuries, not only among Proteſtants, but even in the church of Rome; which I thus prove: The Orthodox expoſitors of the church of Rome, and of the church of England, whether Calviniſts or Lutherans,

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in expounding many difficult paſſages of the New Teſtament relating to Jeſus Chriſt, aſcribe to the *Human* perſon, what is there ſaid of him, which they think unworthy to be predicated of Deity: and aſcribe to the *Divine* perſon, what they imagine cannot with truth be affirmed of a finite creature; thus teaching *two* perſons in Chriſt: but from the above paſſages of Lirinenſis, it is evident, that the Catholic church held only *one* perſon in Chriſt: therefore modern Catholiciſm, whether of England or Rome, differs eſſentially from the Catholic faith of the fifth century.

Again, let us hear what Cyril of Alexandria ſays of ſuch expoſitors: of that Cyril whom Celeſtine Biſhop of Rome, and his ſynod, authorized to draw up a confeſſion of faith for Neſtorius to ſubſcribe; ſuch confidence had they both in his abilities and orthodoxy. Cyril, in his fourth anathema, ſays, "If "any one divides into *two perſons*, or Subſiſtences, what "are contained in the Evangelical and Apoſtolical "Scriptures, which are ſaid of Chriſt by the Saints, or "by Chriſt of himſelf; and applies thoſe to the man, "*independently* of the God Word; and theſe to the

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"Word *alone* of God the Father as worthy of God, "let him be anathema *."

What would be the fate of ſuch expoſitors in the fourth century is unneceſſary after this to mention. Were they Popes, were they Archbiſhops, or Biſhops, or ſimple Preſbyters, they would have been depoſed and ſent to the devil. Pope Honorius, in the ſixth century, for an error akin to this, was anathematized. Auctarium Thdrt. p. 545.

1. Corollary. It follows then that the true Catholic faith has been loſt: and though it be declared in the New Teſtament that *the gates of Hell ſhould not prevail againſt it*, yet that it has ſuccumbed under thoſe of ignorance.

* Ει τις προσωποις δυσιν, ηγουν υποστασεσι, τας τε εν τοις ευαγγελικοις κ αποστολικοις συγγραμμασι, διανεμει φωνας, η επι Χριστω παρα των αγιων λεγομενας, η παρ' αυτε περι εαυτε· κ τας μεν ως ανθρωπω παρα τον εκ Θεε λογον ιδικως νοεμενω προσαπτει· τας δε ως θεοπρεπεις μονω τω εκ Θεε πατρος λογω· αναθεμα εστω. Ep. 3m. ad. Neſtorium.

Thus rendered by Marius Mercator:

Siquis dividit perſonis duabus, vel ſubſiſtentiis eas voces, quæ in apoſtolicis ſcriptis continentur, et evangelicis quæ de Chriſto a ſanctis dicuntur, vel ab ipſo etiam de ſe ipſo, et has quidem, velut homini qui præter Dei Verbum ſpecialiter intelligatur, aptaverit; illas autem tanquam dignas Deo, ſoli Dei Patris verbo deputaverit; anathema eſto.

2. Cor. That the Catholic religion, as actually profeſſed, whether by the church of Rome, or by the church of England, or by that of Geneva, is a ſophiſtication of the true, ancient, orthodox Catholic faith: and therefore, admitting Chriſtianity to be the true religion taught by Jeſus, that the Catholic religion, whereſoever actually profeſſed, is not THAT RELIGION.

Perhaps the reader wiſhes to know, in what manner the ancient Catholics expounded, or reſolved, the difficulties which muſt preſent themſelves to every perſon who peruſes the New Teſtament, concerning God's *dying*, *ſuffering*, *thirſting*, &c. I will, therefore, attempt to gratify him in this reſpect.

The Word, or God Word, was ſaid by the Catholics to have died, becauſe *his* man, the human ſubſiſtence, *had died*. For as man is ſaid to die, when *his body* dies, though the ſoul be alive; in like manner the Word might be ſaid to have died, though unchangeable, when *his* man, that is, *the body* which he had aſſumed, and which was united to him according to the Subſiſtence, *had died*.

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The God Word was ſaid to be ignorant, hungry, thirſty, &c. becauſe *though he was rich, yet for our ſakes he became poor:* and becauſe *he had emptied himſelf,* Phil. ii. 8. εαυτον εκενωσε, *ſe exinanivit,* which we have improperly rendered *humbled himſelf:* the conſequence of which *becoming poor, and emptying* of the God Word, was, that he was thereby enabled to act and ſpeak after the manner of men. *Cyrilli Alexandrini Apologeticus adv. Theodoretum.*

This mode of expoſition may not be ſo eaſily catched, as that which ſuppoſes *two* perſons in Chriſt: but, according to the ancient Catholics, the neceſſary conſequence of this mode of expoſition, and which they have demonſtrably proved, would be the overturning of the Chriſtian doctrines of *redemption, original ſin,* &c. But to proceed farther in this line would be irrelevant and tireſome, I ſhall therefore only refer the curious reader to the ſecond Part of Marius Mercator.

And here I cannot help obſerving that the great proteſtant doctrine of the denial of the real preſence in the elements of the bread and wine in the Lord's Sup-

per, is an expreſs denial of the doctrine held by the ancient Catholics, which, beſides many other paſſages from the Fathers that I might adduce, particularly from the Capitula of Cyril, the following one from Theodoret's Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory l. v. c. 17. fully evinces: When Theodoſius the Great, after the maſſacre of which he was the cauſe at Theſſalonica, was going into the church of Milan, he was met by its Biſhop, Ambroſe, before the veſtibule, who forbade him to enter into the church until he had expiated his crime by a proper penitence. Among other expreſſions, aſcribed by Theodoret to the Biſhop, he makes him ſay, "How can you extend "your hands, ſtill dropping with the blood of un- "righteous ſlaughter? How can you receive in "ſuch hands the holy body of the Lord? How can "you bring to your mouth *his* holy blood?"

Corollary. If the teſtimony of thoſe Fathers, who ſupport the modern Orthodox in their Trinitarian notions, be deemed by them to be concluſive againſt the Humaniſts; ſhould not the teſtimony of the *ſame* Fathers be admitted to be concluſive evidence

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againſt themſelves, in favour of the Roman Catholics, when maintaining the doctrine of the *real preſence.*

From all this it appears, that modern Orthodoxy, of whatever church, is a very modern buſineſs indeed; and, conſequently, can not be founded upon any revelation of the will of God. This demands the particular attention of Doctor Knowles, who, in my apprehenſion, very juſtly grounds his argument upon the antiquity of the Catholic faith. See Part I. of theſe Strictures, p. 18.

The reader, unverſed in theological ſtudies, will perhaps be not a little ſurpriſed upon being informed, that there was not an heretical opinion which was not ſupported by ſome paſſage in the New Teſtament taken in its obvious meaning. But the Catholics were at no loſs on this account, for they readily found others of a contrary import. And I really think, when it is once admitted that the New Teſtament, is the Word of God, and therefore in every part true, that the Catholic mode of expoſition is by far the moſt conſiſtent. For, to talk of reaſon upon this ſubject is utterly inadmiſſible. When God ſpeaks, it is ſurely to preclude human cavilling. How-

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ever, this I affirm only of the ancient Catholics. As to the Catholiciſm of the Roman church I am little acquainted with it: but that it materially differs from that profeſſed by the ancient Catholics, I have already ſhewn in one chief article. With regard to the Catholiciſm of the church of England, if to be judged by our tranſlation of the New Teſtament and Common Prayer Book, it may be affirmed to be a compound of *Manicheiſm*, *Arianiſm*, *Neſtorianiſm*, *Humaniſm*, and *Catholiciſm*. As the firſt, I apprehend, will be thought the moſt improbable charge, I ſhall only prove *it* in this place. Our tranſlation ſays, Eph. ii. 3. "that we are *by nature* [φυσει] the "children of wrath:" this *by nature* is a Manichean tenet, and which no Catholic could endure; for that φυσις here means *truly*. V. Cyrilli Ap. adv. Orientales, Auct. Theod. p. 143.

The difficulty has been already obſerved which attended the Catholics, when treating of theological ſubjects, but particularly when writing in controverſy. What Hilary ſays, ſee Preliminary Diſquiſition, p. 49. upon this head, will give a tolerable idea of it: but all were not ſo fortunate as Hilary. For

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Marcellus, in confuting Aſterius the Arian, who ſeparated *too far aſunder* the divine Subſiſtencies, got himſelf upon a lee ſhore in *erring by exceſs*, by bringing them too cloſe together. Apolinaris, in like manner, in confuting Photinus, happened *to err by exceſs*, with reſpect to the divine and human Subſiſtencies, by uniting them *too cloſely*. Theodore of Mopſueſtua erred *by defect*, in confuting Apolinaris, by not uniting *cloſely enough* the divine and human Subſiſtencies, which error he himſelf recanted: but unfortunately for his pupil, Neſtorius, he was not compoſed of ſuch pliable materials; ever denying *the Union according to the Subſiſtence*.

The reader, I truſt, being now maſter of the heretical opinions, and of the import of the theological terms made uſe of by the contending parties, which I ſcruple not to affirm cannot be juſtly contraverted, is enabled to form a true judgment between me and thoſe learned and ingenious writers whom I intend to animadvert upon.

However, before I proceed farther, it may not be quite unneceſſary to ſay a few words more. Perhaps ſome readers may ſay, where is the uſe of knowing

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ſo accurately the different tenets of the Heretics. To ſuch I ſhall anſwer, firſt, That, were it only a matter of mere curioſity, to know thoſe opinions which cauſed ſuch revolutions in the world, as it is well known that thoſe which related to Chriſtianity did, this alone might be deemed a ſufficient motive to unfold them even to ſatisfy it. But independently of this, it may be added, that without ſuch a knowledge it will be in vain to attempt a hiſtory of Chriſtianity. For Chriſtianity itſelf being only an opinion, or belief, no matter whether well or ill founded, to give a hiſtory of it, it is indiſpenſably neceſſary to lay before the reader the different opinions which ſprung up among Chriſtians: but how can this be done unleſs the writers are firſt acquainted with them. For ſurely no one will affirm that a man is acquainted with the Engliſh hiſtory, who only knows that William the Baſtard conquered Harold at Haſtings, and ſo acquired the crown of England—that King John ſigned Magna Charta—that Charles's head was cut off—without having ſome notion of the cauſes which produced ſuch great effects. With regard to Eccleſiaſtical hiſtory, effects, as far as

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I can judge from the writings of thoſe moderns whom I ſhall venture to animadvert upon, are only known: but with regard to the efficient cauſes they are entirely at a loſs.

Another advantage which will ariſe from ſuch a knowledge, is, that, as the time in which each heretical opinion ſprung up, for the firſt four centuries after Chriſt, is pretty accurately known, a knowledge of the hereſies will ſerve as an unerring thermometer to determine the age of thoſe writings which take notice of, or allude to them. For when writings allude to, or mention doctrines, which were unknown in the time of their ſuppoſed author, there can remain no doubt but that they are erroneouſly aſcribed.

Since I compoſed the firſt Part of theſe Strictures, and what has been juſt laid before the reader, together with a good deal of what follows concerning Mr. Gibbon, I have been induced to look into Doctor Prieſtley's *New Hiſtory of the Chriſtian Church*, to ſee whether he had offered any thing new concerning the *Arian* hereſy. I then looked over what he mentioned concerning the other hereſies, from the Sabellian

to the Eutychian, both inclusive. During the perusal, so many things occurred to me to remark upon, that I have found it necessary to alter, in a small degree, the manner in which I intended to have concluded this work; for so I apprehend I may now call it, seeing to what a bulk it has swollen to; far, very far indeed beyond my original design.

At first I had intended not to have intermixed the remarks which I should make upon any one writer with those belonging to another, or at least to keep them as distinct as I well could: but, not to mention that I have had already occasion frequently to break through this part of my plan, I now apprehend, that, after so long discanting upon the different heresies which sprung up in the eastern Church, it will be more pleasing to my reader, first to lay before him my remarks upon what Doctor Priestley has said concerning the Arian heresy: afterwards upon what Mr. Gibbon has advanced upon the same heresy. Secondly, Upon what Mr. Gibbon has mentioned concerning the Nestorian and Eutychian heresies; the council of Chalcedon,

Chalcedon, and the ſecond oecumenical council of Conſtantinople: I ſhall then continue my obſervations upon what Doctor Prieſtley has ſaid concerning the Neſtorian and Eutychian hereſies, and the council of Chalcedon, where his hiſtory terminates. My third head will contain miſcellaneous remarks upon theſe ingenious writers, where I apprehend they have erred, or have not been ſufficiently attentive.

I acknowledge, that I feel myſelf ſomewhat at a loſs in what manner I ſhall recommence my remarks upon Doctor Prieſtley: namely, whether I ſhall firſt begin with general obſervations upon his work, or reſerve them until I have concluded my remarks. The former I apprehend is the fairer way: as by this means the reader will be able to judge, from my particular remarks, whether my general view of his Hiſtory of Chriſtianity be ſufficiently founded: whereas did I conclude my remarks with the general view, I know there are few readers who would give themſelves the trouble to look back, and compare; and thus they might receive an impreſſion of his work which it did not deſerve. If

in this I have formed an erroneous judgment, the ingenious Doctor will, I truſt, impute it to the head and not to the heart.

Again I repeat it, that, in recommencing my remarks on the ingenious Doctor, I feel myſelf ſomehow awkward: perhaps many will think that I have already proceeded far enough againſt him: and this ſenſation encreaſes, in reflecting that it is owing, in a great meaſure, to his writings whatever progreſs I may have made in theological and metaphyſical ſtudies. Though by nature dauntleſs in what I apprehend to be the cauſe of truth, yet I will not ſay but ridicule and ſocial inconveniencies, were I not inſpirited by his elaſtic mind, exemplified in his writings, might poſſibly, perhaps, have ſo far checqued me, as to make me covetous of worldly eaſe. But wherefore any apology. If Doctor Prieſtley be the man I believe him to be, and ſuch as his friends proclaim him, his errors being expoſed ſhould, ſo far from irritating him, be a gratification. For it is not to be imagined, that a perſon of his character would wiſh that his writings ſhould be a means of miſleading; particularly, as he is eſteemed

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the head of a ſect actually encreaſing, and highly reſpectable from the abilities, learning, and private worth of many of its members.

Again, by expoſing the wonderful ignorance which, I believe, univerſally prevails among all ſects reſpecting the early ages of Chriſtianity, may I not indulge the hope, that it will induce men of learning and abilities to a re-peruſal, and an attentive examination of the early writings concerning the firſt ages of the Church: by which means it can only be ſhewn, whether it is of heavenly origin, or is the offspring of human craft.

I ſhall now proceed to a few preliminary remarks upon Doctor Prieſtley's Hiſtory of the Chriſtian Church: firſt premiſing, that I have only read about a third part of his two volumes at the moſt, and that for the following reaſons: Firſt, Becauſe I apprehend that by much the greater part of his firſt volume is founded upon fable; for ſuch I cannot avoid thinking the New Teſtament to be in the main; the relations of martyrdoms, with which it abounds, I deem to have no better foundation. This I ſhall attempt to ſhew in the Preliminary Diſſertation

tation to my Harmony of the Goſpels. Secondly, The hiſtorical accounts throughout the two volumes are too jejune, in what little I peruſed of them, to afford any entertainment to perſons even moderately verſant in Eccleſiaſtical hiſtory; nor did there appear to be any thing new in them, nor even to be put into a new light, being nothing more than an abridgment of the common Eccleſiaſtical hiſtorians which are in every perſon's hands. What is mentioned of authors, is liable to the ſame obſervation. My object beſides was the Hereſies, and I did not wiſh to have my attention diſtracted.

With reſpect to the hiſtory itſelf, it may be juſtly called an *Heretical Hiſtory of the Chriſtian Church*: for, throughout the whole work, with, I believe, but a ſingle exception, the Doctor takes the part of the Heretics againſt the Catholics. This I can only impute to the Doctor and the Catholics being upon ill terms for a ſeries of years: and that, thinking himſelf ill-treated by the modern Catholics, his reſentment has unawares extended itſelf to their progenitors. For otherwiſe, from his own open, explicit, and manly conduct, it ſhould be expected, in caſe he

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happened to be biaſſed in his relations, that it would be in favour of thoſe who, in theſe qualities, had ſo greatly the advantage of their antagoniſts. Thus Athanaſius, when ſpeaking of the term ouſios, with manlineſs, declares, that it was true that the Catholics, in order to have the Sabellians condemned, were under the neceſſity of avoiding the uſe of that term. For if it were ſaid, that there was an *ouſios* of the Father, and an *ouſios* of the Son, and an *ouſios* of the Holy Spirit, the lower and more ſtupid claſſes of the people, hearing one term (ouſios) aſcribed to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, might be lead to imagine that the Trinity was one thing, or Subſiſtence, with three names: to prevent this, therefore, ſays he, *two* terms, ιδια υποστασις, or ſelf or peculiar Subſiſtence, were introduced by the Catholics in the ſtead of the *one* term ouſios. Socr. l. iii. c. 7. This confeſſion of Athanaſius was manly and open. Let us now ſee what a prevaricating—quibbling—lying part the Heretics in general acted.

With regard to Sabellius, hiſtory has preſerved too few traits concerning him, to enable us to form any

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ſure judgment. I ſhall therefore allow him to be immaculate.

Paul of Samoſate, an Unitarian, by *quibbling*, and *prevaricating*, eſcaped depoſition at the firſt council of Antioch. At the ſecond council, his ſhiftings could no longer ſecure him.

Marcellus, another Unitarian, by confeſſing the *Homoouſios*, but in a ſenſe *very different* from that of the Catholics, which was a baſe prevarication, recovered his biſhopric, from which he was expelled by the Arians for denying the *three* diſtinct Subſiſtences of the Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit. However, it was not his confeſſing and bluſtering about the Homoouſios that procured him the reſtoration of his biſhopric; but his being uſeful to Athanaſius, who otherwiſe held him in contempt.

Arius profeſſed the Homoouſios, having, I preſume, ſome Jeſuitical evaſion, unleſs we ſuppoſe that he was guilty of perjury: for, I believe, no one acquainted with hiſtory can imagine that he was a true convert to the Homoouſian doctrine. The *Homoean* Arians, who held that the Word was *like* the Father *according to the Scriptures*, being in fact Anomoeans, prevaricated

cated to enjoy the ſunſhine of the court. The *Homoeouſians*, or thoſe *Arians* who held that the Father and Son were of *ſimilar* or like Subſiſtences, ſuch as Macedonius, and four or five other biſhops, profeſſed themſelves Orthodox, though few, I believe, will have charity enough to think they were ſincere. But be this as it may, they afterwards profeſſed themſelves to be true Arians, who were all in heart, by whatever appellation they were diſtinguiſhed, Anomoeans; that is, who thought that the Subſiſtences of the Father and Son were *unlike*. The Homoeouſians, like Manes, muſt, I apprehend, have held that the Word was a *part* of the Subſiſtence of the Father.

Photinus an Unitarian, depoſed by the Arians, was probably, in like manner, a prevaricator. For, in thoſe days, when a perſon was promoted to a biſhopric, he gave a profeſſion of faith in his ſynodical epiſtle, to prove himſelf a *ſound* member of the Catholic church; of courſe it follows, that he either *changed* his ſentiments *after* his elevation, or, like Marcellus, whoſe pupil he is called, *prevaricated*, by

profeſſing the Homoouſios, but in a ſenſe very different from that of the Catholics.

I have nothing to object on this head to Apolinaris.

Neſtorius in the end agreed to ſay *Theotocos*, or mother of God, though *prevaricatingly*. Cyril, however, juſtly obſerved to him, that though ſaying this in the beginning of the controverſy would have been held ſufficient; yet that he had proceeded too far, and that depoſition muſt be the conſequence, unleſs he ſubſcribed the *twelve* anathemas, or capitulas. Cyrilli, 3. Ep. ad. Neſt.

Theodoret, the celebrated biſhop of Cyrus, was a *mean, prevaricating, artful Neſtorian*; for ſuch I cannot avoid calling him, being certainly of that ſentiment till after the council of Chalcedon, at which time he was 65 years old; and perſons after that age ſeldom alter their opinion. He, upon hearing of Cyril's death, harangues the multitude at Antioch, ſaying, "Where is he that ſays that Mary is the "mother of God," with a long train of invectives againſt his fallen adverſary. Yet, in a couple of years after, fearing the reſentment of Dioſcorus, the

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ſucceſſor of Cyril, he wrote to him a long humiliating letter, containing a perfect palinody. His conduct, moreover, at the council of Chalcedon was the very oppoſite of candid.

Theodore of Mopſueſtia, who taught the ſame doctrines as Neſtorius, in like manner recanted.

I have elſewhere ſpoken of Eutyches, as a prevaricator and a calumniator; but his followers, as I ſhall hereafter have occaſion to mention, were ever on the watch to over-reach the Catholics *.

As what I have juſt mentioned is incontrovertible, to what other cauſe can the Doctor's partiality towards ſuch a prevaricating ſet be imputed, than to that which I have aſſigned? However, I by no means affirm that he was ſenſible that he was giving a partial repreſentation. To propagate error would be unworthy of his character. This uſeful leſſon, however, may be deduced from it, that no abilities, how comprehenſive ſoever, are capable of guarding a perſon from being *biaſſed*, who ſuppoſes that one party is always wrong.

* Marius Mercator, Auctarium Thdti.

In looking through Doctor Prieſtley's Hiſtory, it appeared to me very clear, that he was not acquainted with any *one* hereſy which ſprung up from Sabellius to Eutyches, both incluſive. In making this aſſertion, I impute no *peculiar* ignorance to the ingenious Doctor. The ſame may with equal truth be affirmed of Moſheim and Mr. Gibbon. I mention the former, as he is eſteemed the hiſtorian of the Catholic Proteſtants: as Mr. Gibbon may be well deemed of the free-thinking Proteſtants, or unbelievers, as as ſome will have it: and Doctor Prieſtley of the Socinians, or Unitarians. And it would be truly very ſurpriſing if they did: for as the hereſies entirely depended upon the doctrine of the Subſiſtencies, which being utterly unknown to them, how was it poſſible that they ſhould have any knowledge of the hereſies themſelves?

I was even ſatisfied, before I entered upon the peruſal of Doctor Prieſtley's account of Arianiſm, that, by the *length* of his relation, he did not know where the *jet* of the queſtion lay between the controverſialiſts. For I have ever perceived, when a ſubject is perfectly comprehended, that it may be clearly

clearly preſented in a few words: and that when the writer neglects to do this, he only covers his want of accurate knowledge, unintentionally perhaps, under a cloud of words. This preſumption was completely confirmed by the peruſal, which the reader, I think, will be ſhortly ſenſible of.

Hoping, that I ſhall have ſome readers who are but little verſed in Eccleſiaſtical hiſtory, I ſhall briefly relate the origin of the Arian hereſy; which I think the more neceſſary, as I do not recollect to have met with a clear ſtatement of it in modern writers: not that I ſuppoſe they were ignorant of it themſelves; but they poſſibly thought, that what they ſaid was ſufficient to give an idea of it ſufficiently accurate. However, I acknowledge, that I was much pleaſed upon diſcovering its immediate origin; which contributed much to make me enter into the ſpirit of it: and, if well founded, will doubtleſs be equally agreeable to the reader unverſed in theſe ſpeculations.

Conſtantine the Great, having embraced Chriſtianity about the beginning of the fourth century, not only immediately put a ſtop to the perſecution

of

of the Chriſtians, wherever his power extended; but alſo procured to them the protection and countenance of his court and government. After defeating and putting to death his rival Licinius, his atttention next devolved towards endeavouring to unite, into one fraternal band of union, the jarring ſects of Chriſtians. This was ſtill the more neceſſary in conſequence of certain doctrines advanced, but a few years before, by Arius, an Alexandrian Preſbyter, which had embroiled the rival biſhops of Nicomedia, the capital of the eaſtern empire, and of Alexandria, the metropolis of Egypt. Arius, after his cauſe had been examined in a council of near a hundred biſhops, was depoſed by Alexander, biſhop of Alexandria. Upon which he wrote to his friend Euſebius, biſhop of Nicomedia, giving an account of the tranſaction; and who, he probably knew, thought as he himſelf did, concerning the God Word. Euſebius thereupon wrote to Alexander to reſtore Arius, as not meriting depoſition; and, at the ſame time, to other biſhops, to interfere wtih their good offices in reconciling Arius and Alexander. Euſebius had, moreover, received thoſe Preſbyters and Deacons who had

been

been depoſed by Alexander at the ſame time with Arius, for holding the ſame opinions with him which was perfectly irregular. Upon ſuch an inſult Alexander wrote an epiſtle, moſt probably a ſynodical one (for, in thoſe times, matters of importance were always tranſacted in Synods *), to all the Catholic biſhops, informing them of the peculiar tenets of Arius, and imputing the ſame to Euſebius himſelf. Such a charge, though well founded, irritated the biſhop of Nicomedia; who, in like manner, wrote to the biſhops, individually, not to concur with Alexander in what he had done againſt Arius.

Thoſe contradictory epiſtles, as was natural, from perſons of ſuch influence, gave riſe to parties, which produced diſorders and tumults in the cities, which gave the Emperor much uneaſineſs. To put a ſtop to the evil, Conſtantine diſpatched his favourite biſhop, Hoſius of Corduba, with letters addreſſed to Alexander and Arius, blaming both—entreating both to be friends—and, *for his ſake*, not to create feuds and diviſions in the church about trifles comprehenſible only to a few †. Conſtantine's letters, no more

* Marius Mercator, pref. p. 42. † Socr. l. 1. c. 7.

than

than the negotiations of Hoſſius, produced the intended effect. The Emperor, therefore, had recourſe to an oecumenical, or general council, to determine this controverſy, and other leſs important matters.

The Catholics before the riſe of Arianiſm, were accuſtomed to the phraſeology of *Trinity in Unity*, or a *Triad* in the *Monad*. Alexander, however, by affirming the *converſe* of the propoſition, or that there was an *Unity in the Trinity*, or a *Monad* in the *Triad*, neceſſarily offended thoſe who thought, without avowing it, that the Son was a *creature*, of whom there appears to have been a good number among the Chriſtians of this age. Now the tenet of a *Triad* in the *Monad* might, in ſome manner or other, as with the modern Socinians, be reconciled to their notions by the ancient Humaniſts; but to affirm that there was a *Monad* in the *Triad*, conveyed the idea of *equality* and *oneneſs* in the Divine Perſons; and for Humaniſts to affirm it, would be a direct denial of their religious tenets. From the manner in which Socrates mentions the origin of the controverſy, it ſeems that Alexander was the *firſt* propounder of the *converſe* of the Trinity in Unity, or *the Unity in Trinity*:

Trinity: and it was, perhaps, intended by him, as a Shibboleth, to discover concealed Humanists. This will account for the obstinacy of the Arians (whom, as holding the Son to be a creature, I consider at present as Humanists) in refusing to confess the consubstantiality of the Divine Subsistences, which upon any other principle is not readily accounted for. But Arians not only denied the *converse*, or the Unity in Trinity, but affirmed, that the Word was *made* by God *out of nothing*, to be employed by him as an *instrument* in making mankind: and that, if God had not this object in view, he would never have made him at all. Arius, moreover, held, that the Holy Spirit was made by the *Son* out of nothing, to be an *instrument* in his hand for to make mankind. That such opinions, maintained by persons of learning, should cause much offence in the generality of Christians, is not surprizing, seeing that it was in fact bringing down, to the level of mankind, two Beings, which were held by them to be, in all respects, equal to the Father. Now, though Arius, agreeably to his principles, could not confess an *Unity in Trinity*; yet he might think differently of a *Trinity in Unity*.

For, if he believed that all things are *in* God, as the Apoſtle teaches, he would have no difficulty in predicating it of *two creatures*, the Word and Holy Spirit. That the *Jet* of the Arian Hereſy conſiſted in affirming one God, and in deviſing ſubterfuges by which they would apparently predicate the ſame of the Son and Holy Spirit, manifeſtly appears from the Hiſtory of this Controverſy in Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret.

The council of Nice was aſſembled, A. D. 325. The number of biſhops was about 300. They are generally reckoned by Catholic hiſtorians after the fourth century at 318, which coincides ſo happily with the number of perſons who accompanied Abraham when he reſcued Lot out of the hands of Chederlaomer, that it is generally imagined to have been an after-thought. Euſebius, as uſual, maintains not one uniform opinion: ſometimes ſaying they were about 300, at other times 250. Some moderns think that Hoſius, biſhop of Corduba, was preſident: others, Euſebius of Ceſarea: for my part, being, it ſeems, doomed to differ upon almoſt all theological ſubjects with the moderns, I am inclined to think, that the Emperor himſelf

himſelf was the preſident or moderator; and that in general councils, to the fourth incluſive, the moderator, or moderators, were appointed by the emperors, and generally layman. But I will enter into no controverſy upon this head, having met with nothing concluſive on either ſide of the queſtion. For with divines it would be prepoſterous to argue from probability. Expreſs language cannot ſilence them.

After ſome jarrings among individuals concerning trifling matters, as perſonal diſputes, &c. the Emperor recommended mutual forgiveneſs, and propoſed to their conſideration the great object of the meeting; Arius, and his opinions. After deliberating ſome time, they condemned both him and his opinions, ſubjoining theſe to a creed compoſed by them, the aſſenting to which was allowed to be the *teſt* of the true *Catholic faith*. For he who aſſented to it *ex animo*, not only condemned the Arian tenets, but even all the future heretical opinions which ſprung up till the time of Eutyches, as pope Leo the Great obſerves, with much ſeeming ſatisfaction, in his letter concerning Eutyches and other heretics. I will therefore lay before the reader a fair

tranſlation of this celebrated creed, without paying any attention to the more elegant one which he may find in the common prayer book: having, however, in my eye the tranſlation of Marius Mercator, which I ſhall ſubjoin.

NICENE CREED.

"We believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker "of all things viſible and inviſible. And in one "Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Son of God, the only begot- "ten, born of the Father, that is, of the Subſiſtence "(ουσια) of the Father, God of God, Light of Light, "true God of true God, born not made, Homoouſios "with the Father (that is, of one Subſiſtence with "the Father), by whom all things in heaven and earth "were made, who for us men, and for our ſalvation, "came down from heaven, and was incarnated, and "made man. He ſuffered, and riſing again the third "day aſcended into heaven, whence he will come to "judge the living and the dead. And in the Holy "Spirit."

"But thoſe, who ſay, there was a time when he "[the Son] was not, and that before he was born, he

"was

" was not, and that he was made out of nothing, (ἐξ οὐκ
" ὀντων) or of any other Subsistence, or Substratum, or
" that say that the Son of God is either convertible or
" changeable, the Catholic and Apostolic Church ana-
" thematizes."

MARIUS MERCATOR's VERSION, p. 71.

Credimus in unum Dominum Patrem omnipotentem, omnium visibilium et invisibilium conditorem. Et in unum Dominum JESUM CHRISTUM filium dei, natum de patre, unigenitum, hoc est, de substantia patris, Deum ex Deo, Lumen ex Lumine, Deum Verum, ex Deo vero, natum non factum, ὁμοούσιον Patri, hoc est, unius cum Patri Substantiæ, per quem omnia facta sunt in cœlo et in terra, qui propter nos homines, et propter nostram Salutem descendit, et incarnatus est, et homo factus est, passus est, et resurgems tertia die ascendit in coelos, unde venturus judicare vivos et mortuos. Et in Spiritum sanctum.

Eos autem, qui dicunt: erat tempus quando non erat, et antequam nasceretur non erat, et quia ex nullis extantibus factus est, aut ex alia Substantia vel essentia, dicentes esse aut convertibilem et commuta-

bilem

bilem ſalium Dei; anathematirat Catholica et Apoſtolica eccleſia. Marius Mercator, p. 71.

This Creed was aſſented to by all the biſhops, except five, who were of courſe depoſed. Euſebius of Nicomedia, and Theagnis, biſhop of Nicæa, were, moreover, baniſhed. Now, when it is conſidered how very few took the part of Arius in this aſſembly—when it is moreover conſidered, that, comparatively, few of the weſtern biſhops attended, who, if they had, would, moſt aſſuredly, as they always did, have agreed with the Pope's legates, and conſequently with the majority—and that of nearly *one hundred* biſhops, which compoſed the Egyptian Synod which condemned Arius, we find no mention of any who oppoſed his depoſition—and that of the five biſhops at the council of Nice, who would not conſent to it, there were only two Egyptians.—It muſt ſurely be concluded, that very few *biſhops*, taking in the whole Chriſtian world, were of his opinion. Add to this, that the Arians never taxed the Catholics with hereſy, their ſole object being to impreſs the *vulgar* with the notion, that though they differed from the Catholics in language, yet, that they agreed with them in ſentiment, than

which

which nothing could be more untrue. Nor have I perceived, that the hiſtorians themſelves have inſinuated, that among the Catholic biſhops there were any concealed Arians; nor is it obſerved by the Arians themſelves, that any, through fear of the civil power, were deterred from declaring themſelves. We have no right, therefore, to argue from it as a principle, that, had not Conſtantine declared in favour of the Catholics, Arianiſm *might* have been the dominant religion, as Dr. Prieſtley inſinuates, vol. II. p. 61. As well as I am capable of judging from the relations of the antient hiſtorian, I cannot avoid thinking, that the utmoſt impartiality was preſerved, inaſmuch as regarded the Arians, in this council. Sozomen ſays, that there *were ſaid* to be in the beginning *ſeventeen* biſhops in the aſſembly of the Arian ſentiment; which ſhews, there was no neceſſity for any improper interference of the civil power to influence it againſt Arius and his opinions. Neither, while government ſupported the Arian faction, which it did for *forty* years, does it appear, that the Arians could at all compare with the Catholics in regard to numbers,

numbers, though they were by no means deficient in men of abilities, reſolution, and induſtry.

The reader will alſo perceive, that the Athanaſian creed is not the only creed which anathematizes, or ſends to the devil, thoſe who entertain heretical notions.

Having laid it down that the Arian hereſy conſiſted in *denying* the Homoouſios or the oneneſs of Subſiſtence, or Subſtratum, of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; under cover of which they held the Son, and Holy Spirit to be only creatures, without however openly avowing it, from which the unpopularity of the tenet could only deter them. To prove this point, I ſhall only conſider one of their numerous creeds, fearing that I would exhauſt the patience of moſt of my readers by a farther conſideration. The one I ſhall pitch upon is that of Antioch, A. D. 345, of which Doctor Prieſtley ſays, that "it is by no means "Arian," and differs in nothing from the Nicene, except in its not containing the word *conſubſtantial*. This ſingle omiſſion ſhould cauſe it to be ſuſpected; but, independently of this, the cloven foot ſufficiently appears. However, the reader will perceive from the

Doctor's

Doctor's expreſſions, that it is, perhaps, of all their creeds the leaſt favourable to my purpoſe.

This creed will, beſides, afford a ſtrong inſtance of Arian prevarication, and Jeſuitical evaſion; their ſole object being to excite compaſſion, as perſons cauſeleſsly oppreſſed for trifles. In order to effect this, and to impoſe upon plain people, the Arians make uſe of ſuch a phraſeology as admitted a twofold meaning, or rather, a ſenſe the very oppoſite of that which the words ſeemed to imply. In it they ſay, "We believe "in God, &c. and in Jeſus Chriſt.... born of the "Father before all ages (αιωνων)." Age here means thoſe portions of infinite time predetermined by God for the manifeſtation of his diſpenſations, one of which was, according to the Arians, the making the Son or Word, and ſending him on earth for our ſalvation, and therefore this phraſe, though apparently equivalent to *Eternal*, was far ſhort of it. Again, they ſay, "But thoſe who ſay that the Son is from nothing, "or of another Subſiſtence, and not *of God*, or that "there was a *time*, or *period*, when he was not, the "holy Catholic church acknowledges as aliens." But this was not ſaying, that that aſſembly, in like manner,

held them to be aliens. They proceed, "Thoſe alſo "who ſay there are three Gods the church alſo ana- "thematizes." But in this anathema the ſynod does not *ſay* that it joins, but only mentions that aſſerting ſuch things is dangerous. However afterwards they ſpeak plain enough; for they ſay, "Though we "confeſs three *Things*, and three *Perſons*, to wit, the "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, *according to the* "*Scriptures*, we do not therefore make three Gods: "For we know only *one* ſelf-perfect, unbegotten, "without beginning, and inviſible; the God and "Father of the only begotten, who *only* ſelf-exiſts, "and who abundantly beſtows exiſtence upon all "others." This was expreſsly declaring, as the Arians ſeparated too far aſunder the Divine Subſiſtences, ſee Part I. p. 140, that the *begotten* Word was not true God, which the Catholics maintained. Beſides, the Catholics held *three* ſelf-perfects, *three* without beginnings. Moreover as they (Arians) ſay, that they held three things or Subſiſtences, without declaring them *conſubſtantial*, and as they called each of them God, it follows, that, to impoſe on the mobility, they held *three* Gods *in words:* but were they

they puſhed on this head, they would have ſaid, that they acknowledged the Son and Holy Ghoſt to be Gods, in the ſame ſenſe, in which Moſes is ſaid to be a God to Pharoah: wherefore they generally conclude their creeds with a wiſh that no curious queſtions ſhould be propoſed, doubtleſs, that their prevarication might not be expoſed. Again, they ſay, "That the Son was not made *as* the other creatures "that were made by him." This was admitting that he was *made:* beſides, it was obviouſly intended to impoſe on the vulgar: for the phraſe *ſeems* to ſay, that he was not made at all; but the fineſſe lay in, that He was made *by* the Father, not *like* the other creatures which were made *by* the Son: ſo that under cover of the term *as* they ſtill preſerved their principles, though in words *ſeemingly* recanting.

Concerning the conſubſtantiality, they ſay, "Though we hold that the Son is, lives, and has a "perſonal ſubſiſtence of his own, in like manner as "the Father, we do not therefore ſeparate Him from "the Father; fancying, as between bodies, that there "is any ſpace, or interſtice between their conjunc-"tion: for we believe that they are *conjoined* without

" *interſtice*, and ſubſiſt inſeparably; the Father " entirely containing the Son in his boſom, the " Son, being entirely connected and joined to the " Father, alone perpetually reſts in the boſom of " the Father." This was hard ſtraining; and it is no wonder that *plain* people could not diſtinguiſh between ſuch a *joining* and the conſubſtantiality.

That the *three things* mentioned in this creed were three Subſiſtences, will appear evident from the creed drawn up and publiſhed by them three years before at Antioch; in which, after acknowledging the Father and Son, as in the creed juſt cited, they ſay, and we believe, " in the Holy Spirit, who was " given to the faithful for a conſolation, ſanctifica- " tion, and an initiation; as our Lord Jeſus Chriſt " ordered his diſciples, ſaying, *Go and teach all* " *nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and* " *of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit*; that is of the " Father being truly Father, of the Son being truly " Son, and of the Holy Spirit being truly the Holy " Spirit; the appellations not being names purely, but " accurately pointing out the *peculiar Subſiſtence*, glory " and *rank*, of each of the [Perſons] named: ſo as indeed

" indeed to be *three* in *Subſiſtence*, and one in conſent." Socr. l. ii. c. 10. Ib. c. 9.

It is truly laughable to think how cloſely the Arians approached to ſaying *Eternal*, the other principle upon which the Catholics accuſed them of hereſy. They ſay, " We believe in the only begot- " ten Son of God, who *before* all periods (αιωνων) and " *before* all beginning (αρχης), and *before* all conceived " time, and *before* all conceived thought, was " born, without paſſion, of God*." Is it ſurprizing, that plain men were impoſed on by them? ſurely they would think ſuch expreſſions tantamount to eternity. The reader will perceive " born *without* " *paſſion*:" by which they certainly meant, that He was not born *of God* at all.

There is ſtill a farther inſtance of Arian prevarication and fineſſe. Thoſe Arians, *according to the Subſiſtence*, whoſe ſentiments approached neareſt to that of the Catholics, were accuſtomed, in their numerous councils, to inſiſt upon the firſt creed publiſhed at Antioch to be re-ſubſcribed, as containing the true faith; namely, of *the Son being like the Father according to the Subſiſtence*;

* Socr. L. II. c. xxxvii.

yet

yet, when examined, no ſuch words will be found in it. But, if they be not, there are others which infer it. For, in the firſt creed publiſhed by the Arians at Antioch, they ſay, "We believe in the "Son, &c." who is "*inconvertible* and *unchange-* "*able*; who is the immutable image of the Subſiſt- "ence, and power, and will, and glory of the "Father." In theſe words the pure Homoeans, or the Homoeans *according to the Scripture*, who doubtleſs were men of uncommon ability, completely over-reached the Homoeans *according to the Subſiſtence*. For theſe latter, as well as all Chriſtians, admitting nothing to be unchangeable, except the Subſiſtence of the Father; when the terms inconvertible, unchangeable, were inſerted in the creed, were contented: but the pure Homoeans, when they confeſſed the Son to be inconvertible, and unchangeable, intended only, that he *was made ſo* by the Father, not that he was of his *own nature* neceſſarily ſo, which the others believed. It appears alſo that the Emperor Conſtantius was in like manner over-reached by the Homoeans: for, referring to the firſt council of Antioch, he ſays, "that it was there

"demonſtrated

"demonſtrated that the Son was *like* the Father *ac-*
"*cording to the Subſiſtence*," yet we find no ſuch phraſe in the creed publiſhed there. Soz. iv. c. 14.

It is amuſing to think how this fickle Emperor was led about by the pure *Homoeans*, or rather the *Anomoeans:* for the pure Homoeans, or Homoeans *according to the Scriptures*, were always concealed Anomoeans, or Arians. Firſt, upon his acceſſion, he was an Homoouſian, or *Conſubſtantialiſt*, Soz. iii. c. 18. In three years after, at the firſt council of Antioch, he became an Homoean *according to the Subſiſtence*. Ten years after, at the council of Syrmium, he was a pure Homoean, or an Homoean *according to the Scriptures*. Nine years after, the pure Homoeans, at the council of Conſtantinople, avowed themſelves to be, what in fact they always were, Anomoeans; and from their depoſing Baſil, biſhop of Ancyra, the Emperor's adviſer, when he was an Homoean *according to the Subſiſtence*, together with ſeveral of thoſe biſhops attached to the ſame faith, it may be well preſumed, that they, at this time, had made a proſelyte of the Emperor himſelf; which, conſidering that they had artful biſhops to contend with, and were, beſides,

but

but few in compariſon of their rivals, muſt be admitted to be proof of uncommon ability and management.

With regard to good faith, the Arians were greatly deficient. When ſome of them, at the requiſition of the Emperor Conſtans, were ſent to him to Gaul, to communicate to him what had been done at the firſt council of Antioch—inſtead of producing the creed publiſhed by the Arian biſhops there, they produced another *.

Ætius, a leader among the Arians, ſeparated himſelf from them, becauſe they had admitted Arius to communion, who, he ſaid, had *perjured* himſelf in the confeſſion of faith, which he delivered to the Emperor Conſtantine. If this charge be well founded, the Preſbyter Euzoius, Euſebius, biſhop of Nicomedia, and Theognis, biſhop of Nicæa, who uſed the ſame words, and certainly thought with Arius, will fall under the ſame imputation.

When it is conſidered that Arius, and thoſe biſhops ſuffered many hardſhips in conſequence of their opinions, which they might have eaſily avoided, were they capable of downright lying and perjury, we may

* Soz. line 2. chap. xvii.

preſume

preſume, without being overcharitable, that their words admitted of ſome explanation or evaſion, by which they might defend themſelves from either charge. I ſhall here put down their words which, I think, admit of evaſion. Arius and Euzoius, after reciting the common heads of the Nicene creed, omitting, however, the term conſubſtantial, ſay, "unleſs we *thus* "believe, and truly receive the Father, Son, and "Holy Spirit, as the Catholic Church and *Scriptures* "*teach*, in which [Scriptures] we entirely believe, may "God be our judge both now and hereafter." The evaſion lay, I apprehend, in *as the Scriptures teach*. But when the biſhops (Euſebius and Theognis) ſay, "that we would not ſubſcribe the anathema, not as if "we found fault with the creed, but not believing "him [Arius] to be ſuch as he was repreſented in "the accuſation, from the letters which he wrote to "us," I cannot avoid acknowledging them to have been complete liars, both in what they ſay concerning the creed, and Arius; and which their future conduct evidently ſhews.

My reader, I truſt, is convinced that my charges againſt the Arians are well founded, and that Dr. Prieſt-

ley's entire ignorance, concerning their peculiar tenets is evinced, from what I have obſerved upon the creed of Antioch, which, he affirms, is *by no means Arian.*

I ſhall now conſider the orthodoxy of Euſebius, the celebrated biſhop of Ceſarea, whom Dr. Prieſtley affirms to be orthodox. However in this aſſertion, I apprehend, it will be found, that the Doctor is not a whit more lucky than in what he has affirmed of the creed publiſhed by the Arians at Antioch. But I ſhall firſt obſerve, that concerning this Euſebius the learned moderns are divided, ſome thinking him to be orthodox, ſome an Arian, others heſitate; which ſhews, that they have had *no principle* to direct them in forming their judgments; and, of courſe, that it is only mere gueſs-work among them; which is clearly the truth, from not one of them knowing what it was to be an Arian. However, I ſhall ſhew him to be an Arian from the teſtimony of the antients, from his words, and from his actions; and when theſe all coincide, it may be deemed a complete proof of his *Arianiſm.*

His ſucceſſor, Acacius, biſhop of Ceſarea, the celebrated *Homoean* Arian, acknowledged Euſebius to be

his

his maſter; an expreſſion equivalent to their holding the ſame tenets. His evidence muſt be allowed to be of great weight, indeed concluſive, as not having been controverted. I may beſides add, that he was at the head of the ſhrewdeſt ſect which ſprung up in the *fourth* century: beſides being an author, having compoſed the life of his Maſter Euſebius, it was impoſſible that he could err upon the queſtion. Euſebius alſo appears, from his language, to have been an Arian. For the exceptions which he makes to the Nicene creed are preciſely the ſame which the Arians have ever made to it: namely, that of the Son *being of the Subſiſtence of the Father*, and *Conſubſtantial*. For, had he acknowledged the Son to be of the Subſiſtence of the Father, it would neceſſarily follow that he was *eternal*, and of courſe not a *creature*. As to his ſaying, that *of the Subſiſtence of the Father* was explained only to mean, that the Son was *of* the Father, but not as a *part of the Father*; this alſo was perfectly Arian: for the Arians held, that the Son was *of the Father*, as all things, according to the Apoſtle, were *of* the Father, and he, of conſequence, included in all things.

Conſubſtantial, he explains as ſignifying nothing

more than that the Son of God had no likeneſs to the things made by him, but *in all things* was *like* the Father of whom he was born. This is perfectly Arian —He ſays, he preferred *born* to *made*, as being *made* was common to other animals, from whom *their Maker*, the Son, ſhould be diſtinguiſhed. Hence it is clear, that he denied the *true birth* of the Son from the Father. No Catholic ever denied this. Concerning the final paragraph of the Nicene creed, he ſays, "that he without difficulty received it, as being *only* "the condemnation of unſcriptural terms, which "was the ſource of all hereſies." If the reader will examine the final paragraph, he will find this aſſertion to be a downright falſehood, or rather a groſs equivocation; it being clearly a condemning, with an anathema, the tenets of Arius.

It is ſingular, that this letter of Euſebius to the Ceſareans, which Socrates has inſerted in his hiſtory, exiſts not among Euſebius's writings. In his life of Conſtantine he gives numbers of letters, and many of them not half ſo important. I am inclined to think that he was aſhamed of it.

Moreover, in this letter, giving an account of the creed

creed presented by himself to the council of Nice, he says, "We believe each of them [the Father, Son, "and Holy Spirit], to be a *separate* Subsistence and "Person (ὑπαρξις), the Father to be truly Father, "the Son truly Son, and the Holy Spirit truly the Holy "Spirit, as our Lord said to his disciples, *go ye and* "*teach all nations in the name of the Father, &c.*" Language similar, though I think rather more strongly Arian than that held by the Arian Fathers at the councils of Antioch, 341, and 345.

Now as to his actions, which may be deemed the surest test of a man's principles. He was the enemy of Athanasius and Eustathius of Antioch, the two chiefs of the Consubstantialists, and the persecutor of Marcellus. Marcellus, it is true, was not rightly orthodox, as unluckily he happened to err by excess: and, for his usefulness to Athanasius, he was treated with gentleness and compassion by the Catholics. However, his error being the direct opposite of that of the Arians, contributed not a little to excite the wrath of this prevaricating and learned Arian bishop against him.

I shall now consider what Doctor Priestley has

said

ſaid concerning the council of Ariminum. After mentioning, not very accurately, a few of the articles of the creed preſented by the Arians, in order that it might be accepted and received by the aſſembly, the Doctor adds, "When this creed had been read, "a great majority, who were not diſpoſed to favour "the Emperor, ſaid, they did not come thither "to fix a creed, becauſe none was wanted; but "to repreſs any innovations that might have been "made in any article of faith; and therefore if "there was nothing new in the creed which was "preſented, they might proceed to the condemnation "of the Arian doctrine, which had been the cauſe "of ſo much miſchief in the world." 'On this the 'biſhops were divided, ſome receiving the new 'creed, and others adhering to the Nicene.' Vol. II, p. 166.

By this repreſentation it appears, that the Catholics were *divided* in their ſentiments concerning the preſented creed. But the caſe is far otherwiſe. For when this creed was read, the Weſtern Catholics obſerved (being always apprehenſive of being over-reached by Greek ſubtlety), "We came not "hither

" hither as wanting a creed, for we keep uncorrupted " the faith which we received from the beginning: " but we came in order to repreſs any novelties " ſhould they be propoſed; therefore, if what has " been recited contains no novelties, openly anathe- " matize the Arian hereſy, in like manner as the " ancient eccleſiaſtical canon has expelled other " hereſies as blaſphemous :" thus making the anathematizing of Arius the *teſt* of the ſoundneſs of the creed, to which, as in the Nicene creed, the anathema ſhould have been ſubjoined. It is alſo underſtood in this ſenſe by Valeſius. This condition not being accepted by the Arian biſhops, they were for this reaſon depoſed by the Catholics *in this very council.*

The Catholics, after having depoſed the Arian biſhops, wrote a very reſpectful letter to the Emperor Conſtantius, requeſting permiſſion to return to their ſeveral dioceſes to attend their duty: to which the Emperor, under the influence of Arian biſhops, gave a negative. They again wrote a ſecond letter to him, mentioning, beſides other matters, the inconveniences which they muſt ſuffer, if they were obliged to undertake their journey homeward in the incle-

ment

ment winter ſeaſon. Having waited for an anſwer ſome time, but in vain, the biſhops broke up the council of themſelves, and returned home; upon hearing which the Emperor ſeemed much offended, (though it was probably the ſnare intended for them), and ordered the creed preſented at the council for its approbation by the Arians to be ſent to each biſhop, who, upon refuſal to ſubſcribe it, ſhould be expelled, and another elected in his ſtead. Doctor Prieſtley, p. 167, ſays, "The *greater part* being intimidated "*complied*, and thoſe, who would not ſubſcribe, "were baniſhed, &c." and cites, Socr. II. c. xxxvii. Socrates however makes *no mention* of any who *complied:* from his narration, it ſeems none *did* comply.

What has been juſt laid before the reader certainly evinces the partiality of the Doctor's relation; and tends alſo to ſupport a notion of the Doctor's, which I think he has taken up without ſufficient, perhaps any, authority, of the extreme time-ſervingneſs of the Catholic biſhops of the fourth century, indeed I might ſay of every century.

I will ſubjoin a few miſcellaneous remarks upon what

what Doctor Prieſtley has ſaid concerning the Arian hereſy itſelf.

Vol. II. p. 29. The Doctor ſays, "But as in this "letter he [Alexander] ſays that their [Arius and "aſſociates] doctrine was the ſame with that of Ebion, "Artemas, Paul Samoſatenſis, and Lucian of Antioch, "*in which he was certainly miſtaken*, it is the more "probable, that there might be ſome miſrepreſenta-"tion in the firſt account of the opinions of Arius: "when Alexander ſaid that the doctrine of Arius was "the *ſame* with that of Ebion, &c. Alexander here only expreſſed himſelf agreeably to the ancients, and by no means intended that Ebion held *preciſely the ſame* doctrines with them, but only that they agreed in ſome *one* or *more* eſſential particulars, which was the caſe with Arius, Ebion, &c.: for they both held him to be a *creature*. Any perſon who has peruſed the Neſtorian Controverſy in the original authors, muſt be ſenſible of the juſtneſs of this obſervation. Theodoret, for inſtance, never omits taxing Cyril with holding the opinion of Arius, Eunomius, and Apolinaris. The Catholics, on the other hand, object to the Neſtorians the holding the ſentiments of Ebion,

Paul Samoſatenſis, and Photinus, notwithſtanding the wide difference between Neſtorius and Ebion, and Arius and Cyril. But Cyril was thus calumniated, as *confounding* the divine and human Subſiſtences, like Arius, &c. And Neſtorius is juſtly coupled with Ebion, &c. who held Jeſus to be a mere man, becauſe he denied *the Union according to the Subſiſtence.*

P. 49. "According to Philoſtorgius," the Doctor ſays, "Alexander biſhop of Alexandria, and "Hoſius of Corduba (who is well known to have "been in the good graces of the Emperor) meeting "with ſome others at Nicomedia, ſettled among "themſelves, that in the enſuing council, Chriſt "ſhould be declared to be *conſubſtantial* with the "Father, and that Arius ſhould be baniſhed." We have only an epitome of the Hiſtory of Philoſtorgius, by Photius, patriarch of Conſtantinople, whom he calls the *lying* Philoſtorgius; ſo that, when unſupported by other writers, little ſtreſs ſhould be laid upon any teſtimony of his. What he ſays in the preſent inſtance is utterly improbable. Had the Doctor examined the following chapter of Philoſtorgius, he would have there found, that *all* the *Arian* biſhops

except

except two *prevaricated.* Among the prevaricators he reckons Euſebius of Nicomedia, whom he calls the great!!! Philoſtorgius being an *Arian*, his teſtimony may in the preſent inſtance be admitted. This circumſtance ſhould not have been unnoticed by an *impartial* hiſtorian.

P. 47. "By their [the fathers aſſembled at Nice] "aſſerting that he [Jeſus Chriſt] was begotten *before all* "*Worlds*," there is no ſuch clauſe in the Nicene creed.

P. 48. "God of God—Light of Light." The phraſe *God of God* implied, according to the Catholics, conſubſtantiality, and not, as the Doctor ſuppoſes, that his divinity was *derived* from the Father; according to the Arians it implied a *made* God—*Light of Light*, ib.

P. 64. After mentioning the recall of Euſebius biſhop of Nicomedia, and Theognis of Nicæa, the Doctor obſerves, that Euſebius, having great influence with the Emperor, had no doubt uſed his good offices in favour of Arius: in order I preſume to obtain his recall from baniſhment. But it appears from the petition of theſe biſhops to the

Emperor, that Arius had been recalled from baniſhment *before* themſelves. Socr. l. i. c. xxiv.

P. 75. "So much was Conſtantine changed "before his death, that the Arians ſaid (and "though Sozomen ſays it was a lie, I cannot think it "wholly improbable) that he intended to have called "another council, in order to introduce the term "*Homœouſios of like ſubſtance*, for Homoouſios *of the* "*ſame ſubſtance* into the creed, and that Conſtan-"tius, who thought as his father did at the time of "his death, in calling the council of Ariminum, "did the very ſame thing that he had recommended." One ſhould hence infer that Conſtantine and his ſon Conſtantius were *Homoeouſians* at the time of the former's death; but ſo far was this from being the caſe, that Sozomen, l. iii. c. xiv. aſſerts, that Conſtantius and his brother Conſtans, who is well known to have been *always* Catholic, adhered to their father's faith, namely, the Nicene. One ſhould alſo infer from it, that the term Homoeouſios was inſerted in the creed of Ariminum, but there is no ſuch term in the creed publiſhed there. The term Ouſios on the contrary is condemned as unſcriptural, which is, at the leaſt, one *half* of the term Homoeouſios, and the

Son

Son was declared to be Homoeos, or like to the Father, [*according to the Scriptures*, that is as to *will*, but unlike to the Subſiſtence.] A doctrine widely different from the Homoeouſios. However, at this time the Homoeans dared not avow what is between the brackets.

The Doctor, moreover, frequently inculcates in his writings, that, after a certain age, people ſeldom change their opinions: however, in the preſent inſtance he may be thought to be a little credulous himſelf, in believing, againſt expreſs teſtimony, that Conſtantine had *changed* his mind after he had paſſed his grand climacteric.

Ib. "It is at leaſt *highly probable*, that whatever "Conſtantine might really think of the perſon of "Chriſt, he became diſſatisfied, as many others were "with the term *conſubſtantial*, both on account of its "being unſcriptural, and of its implying not only an "original, but a continued unity*, ſuch as the "Sabellians had maintained. *It is ſaid* that when "Euſebius of Nicomedia was firſt accuſed to him of "diſapproving this term, the biſhop ſhewed his gar-

* Query, Can their be a *diſ*continued unity?

"ment

" ment, and with firmneſs replied, ' If this garment " ſhould be torn in two pieces, could it be ſaid that " both the parts were *of the ſame ſubſtance.*' The " Emperor made no reply, but ſeemed much diſturbed " at it, finding himſelf diſappointed in his expectation " of putting an end to the diſcuſſion of all queſtions " of this kind." The Doctor may think it *highly probable* that Conſtantine became diſſatisfied with the term *conſubſtantial*: but nothing but prejudice could induce ſuch an opinion againſt the *expreſs* and *repeated* teſtimony of Sozomen. The term *conſubſtantial*, the Doctor ſays, implies continued unity: the reader, I truſt, is ſatisfied, that according to the Catholics, whoſe opinion the Doctor is giving, that it did *not* imply *ſo much*.

It is alſo very ſingular that the ingenious Doctor did not hit upon the true meaning of the term Homoouſios from his mentioning the circumſtance of Euſebius tearing his garment, and aſking could both the parts be afterwards ſaid to be of the *ſame ſubſtance?* Why not? let the Doctor's caſſock be torn in two pieces, and let him aſk any one, whether each piece be not of the ſame ſubſtance, and I will venture

to

to ſay, he will meet with no one to deny it. But inſtead of the ſame ſubſtance, let its true expoſition be put down, and then the force of Euſebius's query will be ſtriking: for then it will be, Are *both* the the parts *one Subſiſtence* or *Subſtratum?* Which to affirm would be prepoſterous.

Ib. "This was before the baniſhment of Euſebius, "and is ſaid to have been the immediate cauſe of it. "But as, when he recalled him, he *admitted* of his "*explanation* of the term conſubſtantial; conſiſtent with "his own ideas, and Euſebius had his confidence after-"wards, and till the time of his death, while *all* "*the Conſubſtantialiſts were entirely out of favour*, it is "almoſt certain, that, for ſome reaſon or other, he "wiſhed to have that word omitted in the creed, and "that he would probably have changed that term Ho-"mooufios *of the ſame ſubſtance* for Homoeoufios *of like* "*ſubſtance*, as leſs exceptionable, being a term that the "Conſubſtantialiſts themſelves could not well object "to, ſince what is of the *ſame* ſubſtance with another, "muſt of courſe be like it. The great object of Con-"ſtantine from the firſt was merely to preſerve the "unity of the church, and he *probably never* had much

"zeal,

"zeal for the queſtion itſelf." For this paragraph there is *no* authority cited: and indeed, I may ſay, that it is utterly void of probability. Euſebius, by *conſenting* to the *faith*, which was always attended with *ſubſcription*, deceived Conſtantine, and was of courſe a baſe prevaricator. That he did conſent to the *Nicene faith*, is clear from his letter to the biſhops, Socr. l. i. c. xiv. That Conſtantine received Euſebius becauſe he admitted of *his* explanation of the term conſubſtantial, I doubt not, is ſaid without authority; at leaſt none is cited. Euſebius probably acted as Arius and Euzoius did, when recalled from baniſhment. The Emperor, when they came into his preſence, aſked them if they would *ſubſcribe to the faith*: they immediately aſſenting, the Emperor ordered them to give *the faith in writing*, Socr. l. i. c. xxv. From the inſtances already adduced of Arian fineſſe, and prevarication, the reader will conceive how eaſily the Emperor might have been deceived by artful divines; who, beſides, was the more liable to it from his anxiety to eſtabliſh union, and his little proficiency in the Greek language. It was, perhaps, on account of this tranſaction, which paſſed between

Conſtantine

Conſtantine and Arius, that Ætius charged the latter with perjury: for, in the converſation which Conſtantine had with the anonymous Preſbyter, who was the main inſtrument of Arius's being recalled, he ſays, "If Arius ſubſcribes the decrees of the ſynod, "and thinks the ſame things with it, I will willingly "admit him into my preſence, and ſend him back "with honour to Alexandria." Having been juſt before aſſured of this by the Preſbyter, he writes to Arius to return from baniſhment*. It is not ſurprizing then, that ſince the Emperor was ſo intent upon eſtabliſhing union, that he ſhould be angry with the Catholics for *not* communicating with the Arians, who were *ſeemingly* ſo ready to ſacrifice their opinions to him: I ſay *ſeemingly*, for they never *ex animo* acknowledged the Homoouſios. What farther contributed to embarraſs the Emperor was, that the Fathers, on both ſides, ſcrupled to define the term Homoouſios: ſo that Conſtantine was not well apprized of the wide difference between the term Homoouſios, and every other mode of phraſeology by which the Arians were attempting to ſatisfy the people. But that *all the Conſubſtantialiſts*

* Socr. ib.

were *entirely* out of favour is utterly improbable; nay, contradicts what the Doctor has asserted of Eusebius of Cesarea, for he will not say that this bishop, who he affirms was orthodox, that is, a Consubstantialist, was entirely, or at all, out of the Emperor's graces.

P. 78. "The Audeans paying no regard to the "decision of the council of Nice, which *they thought* "to have been *dictated* by complaisance for the "Emperor." And,

P. 87. "All that *power* could do, Constantine "completely effected. The public creed was *just* "what he *chose* it to be." These assertions are unsubstantiated by any authorities, which I hope will not be omitted in the next edition of the New History of the Christian Church.

P. 111. "As to Constantine there can be no "doubt but that he was as sincere a Christian *before* "the death of Crispus, as he was after that event." But could he be a *sincere* believer who had *modified* creeds agreeably to his whim? Crispus was put to death the year *after* the Nicene council.

As to the cause of Constantine's conversion *, I am

* An appearance of a cross in the heavens.

rather

rather inclined to impute the lie to the *Arian* Euſebius, than to the old ſoldier. Conſtantine, from his profeſſion, ſhould be ſuppoſed incapable of ſuch an impudent falſehood. His life, compoſed by Euſebius, in which the miracle is recorded, did not appear till *after* Euſebius's death, nor does it ſeem to have been much known for ſome years after. Vid. Gibbon.

Concerning the Doctor's critique upon Mr. Gibbon's imputing to Chriſtians, the doctrines of *paſſive obedience*, and *non-reſiſtence to the powers that be*, however *ill*-founded to judge from the *practice* of Chriſtians, is certainly *well*-founded if our judgement is to be determined by the *expreſs words* of the apoſtle, or the writings of the early fathers *. And here I cannot help remarking, from what I have been able to obſerve from hiſtory, that Chriſtians, I mean the heads of them, or rather thoſe who put them in motion, of almoſt *every* denomination, have held one uniform language, namely, *do as you would be done by*; but in their actions are utterly regardleſs of this divine maxim.

P. 117. "Conſtantius embracing what was then

* See Juſtin Martyr, p. 398. ed. Thrilby; Tertullian de Corona, ch. ii. and Origen ad. Celſ. p. 79.

" called the Arian doctrine, ſuch Arianiſm was in " his reign the orthodoxy of the Eaſt, and the " majority of the biſhops were too ready then, as " they have been *ever ſince*, to change with the " court." This time-ſervingneſs is very true with regard to the *Arian* biſhops of that time: but till I ſee ſome proof, I beg leave to exclude from this cenſure the *Catholic* biſhops. With reſpect to what has happened *ever ſince*, being little converſant in modern Eccleſiaſtical hiſtory, I ſhall leave it with my lords the biſhops.

P. 123. " Socrates ſays, that the eccleſiaſtical " canons forbade any thing to be done in the church " without the conſent of the biſhop of Rome. How- " ever, ſays the Doctor, he could only mean, that " it had not been reckoned decent to determine any " thing of conſequence without the concurrence of " the biſhop of Rome, any more than without the " concurrence of the biſhop of Antioch, of Conſtan- " tinople, or of Alexandria. For there was no " decree of any council in favour of the biſhop of " Rome in particular." The biſhop of Rome claimed this prerogative from cuſtom, and as *the ſucceſſor of Peter*,

Peter, the chief of the apoſtles. The biſhops of Antioch, &c. never claimed *ſuch* a privilege at all. The Doctor in various paſſages ſhews himſelf partial againſt the biſhops of Rome. See p. 163, where he mentions Liberius having *ſubſcribed* to the creed of Ariminum (that is, of having prevaricated), of which neither Socrates nor Sozomen, nor Theodoret have made any mention. Farther, Sozomen, l. iii. c. 10. agrees with Socrates: concerning the neceſſary aſſent of the biſhop of Rome: ſo here we have the *inference* of a modern againſt the *expreſs* teſtimony of *two* of the ancients; and which an attentive peruſal of their hiſtories will ſhew to be unfounded. But where is ſuch a prerogative contended for in favour of the biſhops of Conſtantinople, Antioch, &c.? No where. The fact is, that theſe biſhops in their functions were confined to their peculiar patriarchates; as the metropolitans were, when *autocephali*, or independent, to their provinces in relation to eccleſiaſtical matters: and, when they exceeded its limits, they ſubjected themſelves to depoſition; as was the caſe of the celebrated Chryſoſtom, for depoſing biſhops in the province of Aſia, which depended on the ſee of Epheſus. Moreover, notwith-

* Vid. Soz. l. iii. c. 23.

ſtanding

ſtanding Cyril, biſhop of Alexandria the ſecond ſee after that of Rome, did not want information concerning the heretical tenets maintained by Neſtorius, yet, till he was appointed the pope's vicar in that buſineſs, he could do no more than warn Neſtorius of the conſequences: but, upon this appointment, he threatened to depoſe him, unleſs within a limited time, *agreeably to what had been determined at Rome*, he recanted. Now, had no ſuch power been acknowledged by the Catholics to have been veſted in the ſee of Rome, how happened it, that none of the friends of Neſtorius objected to the pope's intermeddling in the buſineſs, as being out of his province? Was Cyril a man to be made a tool of? The fact is, that had not Theodoſius aſſented *to the requeſt of Neſtorius*, (not to the perſuaſion of Cyril, as Doctor Prieſtley ſays, p. 506), in aſſembling a general council, Neſtorius would have been depoſed, in conſequence of the ſentence pronounced againſt him at Rome. The reader is not to ſuppoſe, that it depended upon the private will of the biſhop of Rome to depoſe any perſon, or not: this power he could only exerciſe in a ſynod of thoſe who were appointed his counſellors; but

but who I apprehend, are not ſpecifically deſcribed in hiſtory: neither could patriarchs, nor metropolitans, nor biſhops proceed, except in their ſynods, upon eccleſiaſtical matters. But the biſhop of Rome, in his ſynod, was *univerſal overſeer* (which is the meaning of the term *biſhop*) of all eccleſiaſtical perſons and concerns, at leaſt after the middle of the fourth century.

Pelagius, who will not be ſuppoſed to be *partial* to the claims of the biſhop of Rome, ſays, "This is our "faith, moſt holy pope, in which if perchance there "be any thing unwiſely or incautiouſly advanced, we "deſire to be corrected by you, who poſſeſs the faith "and ſee of Peter." Hæc eſt fides, Papa beatiſſime, in qua ſi minus perite, aut minus caute aliquot forte poſitum eſt, emendari cupimus a te qui Petri et fidem et ſedem tenis. Marius Mercator, Part Firſt, p. 14. c. 1. This evidence muſt be deemed to be concluſive upon this point.

P. 137. "Sozomen, however, ſays that they "[the fathers at Serdica] only made no mention of "it [conſubſtantial], but anathematized thoſe who "ſaid there were three Gods; that Chriſt was God, "or the ſame with the Father, Son, or Spirit."

This

This laſt clauſe ſhould be rendered thus: or that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit were the ſame thing; alluding to the Sabellians.

P. 149. The Doctor mentions only *two* creeds being drawn up at Syrmium: there were *three*. The Doctor ſays, "that in the Greek creed, Chriſt is called "God of God, Light of Light, and that it anathema-"tized thoſe who taught that the Son was *made out of* "*nothing*, or *of any other ſubſtance than that of the* "*Father*; or who ſay *that there* ever *was a time in which* "*he did not exiſt*." "ever" is here redundant, and is, beſides, a very important term: no Arian would ſay it: moreover the creed does not anathematize ſuch perſons; it only ſays that the holy and Catholic church anathematized ſuch.

P. 156. "Becauſe he [Ætius] diſputed with ſub-"tlety concerning the nature of God, his enemies "reproached him with the name of *Atheiſt*." He more probably acquired this appellation from denying the divinity of the Son. Socr. l. ii. c. 35.

That Arius was an Anomoean, contrary to what Doctor Prieſtley ſuppoſes, p. 155 and 187, is evident from Socrates, ib. and Sozomen, l. iv. c. 12. The Doctor mentions p. 191, that Ætius was made a

biſhop. I would be glad to know upon what authority.

P. 159. The Doctor makes Conſtantius proceed in a ſtrain of furious invective *againſt the diſciples of Ætius*, and immediately after adds, "Thus we ſee "Conſtantius taking as decided a part *in favour of* "*the Homoeouſians* (for ſo the *diſciples of Ætius* were "called)." Is not this evidently contradictory? Moreover, the diſciples of Ætius were never called *Homoeouſians:* they were named *Anomoeans*.

I ſhall only add a few more remarks. To notice all would be endleſs; there being, I really believe, in his work more errors than pages, at leaſt where the hereſies are the ſubject. But the Doctor is peculiarly inaccurate in giving the Arian creeds; the terms *Homoeos—Homoeos kat ouſian—Homoeouſios*, and *Homoouſios*, being expounded by him, ſometimes in one manner, and ſometimes in another. But independently of this, which may be deemed a trivial error, ſeeing that with other moderns he might ſuppoſe they were terms without having any peculiar ideas annexed to them, they are frequently expounded erroneouſly, of which I ſhall adduce a few inſtances.

P. 174. line vi. and p. 184. line xii. ομοιος is expounded by *like ſubſtance*. Subſtance in this place is redundant.

P. 309. Ομοιος κατα γραφας is rendered *ſimilar*, inſtead of *ſimilar according to the Scriptures*. Socr. p. 133. B.

P. 309. Ομοιουσιος is rendered by *like*, inſtead of *like ſubſtance*, or rather *like Subſiſtence*. The reader will alſo perceive in theſe inſtances that ομοιος is rendered ſometimes by *like*, ſometimes by *ſimilar*.

P. 169. Macedonius the *Arian*. The Doctor thinks the cruelties imputed to him by the ancient hiſtorians improbable. However they are uncontradicted by the ancients.

The Doctor ſays, that Arius introduced nothing *new* reſpecting the perſon of Chriſt, except that the Logos in him was a creature, and the neceſſary conſequences of this opinion, is evident from nothing *more* being objected to him by the fathers of the Nicene council: nor even by Alexander in his letter to the biſhops, in which the Doctor thinks that the tenets of Arius are *much exaggerated*. But had

Arius

Arius denied the *animus*, as it is acknowledged he did; and had the *animus*, or *anima rationalis*, conſtituted a part of the orthodox faith at this time, is it to be conceived, that Alexander would have omitted, in his *ſuppoſed exaggerated account*, ſuch a material defect in Arius's creed? Is it to be imagined that the Nicene fathers would have omitted ſo material an article? Add to this, that when this notion was advanced by Apolinaris, and the conſequences of it pointed out, and yet maintained by Polemio the head of the Synouſiaſts, and exclaimed againſt by the Catholics; I aſk, how happened it that Arius, in like manner, denying the animus, was not alſo immediately exclaimed againſt? This argument is ſtill farther ſtrengthened, as Arius would then have been the *firſt* who advanced the notion, and which, of courſe, ſhould from its *novelty* have produced a more lively impreſſion. Beſides, how came it not to be objected to Arius, as it was to Apolinaris, that according to his ſcheme, the body and anima only would be redeemed by the Word, the precious ſoul being left in hell; for the fathers held, that that

part only of the man, or *loſt ſheep*, as they termed it, would be ſaved which was carried by the Word*. Now the ſilence of the Catholics upon this article ſhews, that Arius agreed with themſelves concerning that part of the *loſt ſheep* which was carried by the Word.

The reader, however, is not to infer from this, that the Catholics, in conſequence of their defect upon this article of the true faith, introduced expreſsly any new dogma into their creed: they were too wiſe and politic not to know, what effects would be produced in the minds of men by a changing or altering of creeds. What they did, was to determine, that their *anima* was *rationalis*, which was done at a ſynod held at Rome, A. D. 370, ſcouting the notion of any other anima as a fiction.

The Catholic faith may therefore be compared to a tree, which never ſhoots forth except when neceſſary. In its principle, it was, and ſhould be, capable of perpetual developement. But this was never

* Marius Mercator, Part I. p. 183.

attempted

attempted without urgent neceſſity *. Thus *conſubſtantial* was a developement of the Catholic faith, neceſſary to diſcover and expoſe, in order to expel, thoſe who affirmed the Word to be a creature and not eternal, from the ſociety of the faithful. In like manner the Holy Spirit was not declared to be *God* before the firſt council of Conſtantinople 381; and then becauſe the Macedonians had denied his divinity, and in proof thereof had aſſerted, that he was not declared to be God in the Nicene creed. At the council of Epheſus *the Union according to the Hypoſtaſis* was tacitly acknowledged, by condemning the doctrine of Neſtorius. At the council of Chalcedon it was determined, that there were *two natures*, or Subſiſtences, in Chriſt, thereby condemning the Eutychian doctrine: and *one Perſon*, in oppoſition to what Neſtorius had advanced. It was afterwards determined, that Chriſt had *two* Wills in *one* Perſon, or Subſiſtence, to condemn the Monothelites, or thoſe who only held one Will in Chriſt.

Having detained the reader ſo long upon what

* Vincentius Lirinenſis Comm.

Doctor,

Doctor Prieſtley has ſaid concerning the Arian hereſy, I ſhall confine myſelf to a few obſervations upon what Mr. Gibbon has advanced, in the twenty-firſt chapter of his hiſtory, on the ſame ſubject. Indeed, it will be unneceſſary to dwell long upon this author, when I ſhall ſhew, that he is unacquainted, like the generality of the moderns, with the true import of the term Homoouſios. For it will thence follow, that what he ſays of the Arians, inaſmuch as regards the difference of their tenets, from thoſe of the Catholics, can only be right by accident.

Mr. Gibbon ſays, note 58. "That *Homoouſios* "means of one Subſtance in *kind*, hath been ſhewn "by Petavius, Curcellæus, Cudworth, Le Clerc, &c. "and to prove it would be actum agere." I ſhall take the liberty, however, to affirm, that all theſe learned writers were ignorant of its true meaning. For, if what they ſaid were true, the Catholics, or Homoouſians, could not have objected to the term Homoeouſios, nor the Arians to the term Homoouſios. Beſides, were what they ſay its true meaning, they would be capable of explaining the Arian hereſy. Moreover, were what theſe learned writers affirm the

fact,

fact, the antients would then have been at wars about an insignificant letter for centuries, which is tantamount to affirming *an effect without a cause*, than which nothing can be more unphilosophical, or absurd. But agreeably to the meaning which I have assigned to it, there is *a cause proportionate to the effect produced*; namely, that the oppugners of this term must necessarily have affirmed *three* Gods, which was introducing Heatheniſm; or the making to descend, from their usurped thrones, *two* of the Eternals, the Son and Holy Spirit.

Note 149. "I cannot," says Mr. Gibbon, "forbear "reminding my reader, that the difference between "Homoousios and Homoiousios is almost invisible to "the nicest theological eye." This then must be owing to ignorance. The latter implied three eternal *distinct* beings: the former three eternal beings, neither united, nor separated.

Page 249. Mr. Gibbon charges the Catholics with holding "Three *distinct* and infinite minds or sub-"stances," or Tritheism. In this he has not done them justice: which must be imputed to his ignorance concerning the term Homoousios. I am sure he will

excuſe my term, ſeeing that he has ſo many eminent theologians to keep him in countenance.

Page 257. "The ſect which aſſerted the doctrine "of a *ſimilar ſubſtance* was the moſt numerous, at leaſt, "in the provinces of Aſia; and when the leaders of "both parties were aſſembled in the council of Seleucia, "their opinion would have prevailed by a majority of "105 to 43 biſhops. The Greek word which was "choſen to expreſs this myſterious reſemblance, bears "ſo cloſe an affinity to the orthodox ſymbol, that the "*profane of every age* have derided the furious conteſts "which the difference of a ſingle diphthong excited "betwixt the Homoouſians, and the Homoiouſians. "As it frequently happens, that the ſounds and cha-"racters which approach neareſt to each other, acci-"dentally repreſent the moſt oppoſite ideas, the ob-"ſervations would itſelf be ridiculous, if it were poſ-"ſible to make any *real* and *ſenſible diſtinction* between "the doctrines of the Semiarians, as they were impro-"perly ſtyled, and that of the Catholics themſelves." The Profane, before they exerciſe their wit, ſhould take care to be well informed, otherwiſe it may be retorted. The diſtinction between the Semiarians

and

and Catholics is very obvious: the former held *three* Gods, the latter *one* only. *Similar Subſtance* in the above cited paſſage ſhould be *ſimilar according to the Subſiſtence* ομοιον κατ' ουσιαν. Mr. Gibbon juſtly obſerves, that the Homoiouſians were improperly ſtyled *Semi-Arians*. For the Arians held only *one true God*, and that the Son and Holy Spirit were *two Creatures*; whereas the former held *three true Gods* in words, though perhaps not in fact. It is farther to be remarked that, in the above paſſage, Mr. Gibbon confounds the *Arians according to the Subſiſtence* with the Homæouſians, or Macedonians, alias the Semi-Arians.

P. 248. "A *large majority* of the biſhops of Aſia "appeared to ſupport or favour his [Arius] cauſe; "and their meaſures were conducted by Euſebius of "Ceſarea, the moſt learned of the Chriſtian prelates;" &c. And again,

Page 250, Mr. Gibbon ſays, "If the biſhops of "the council of Nice had been permitted to follow the "unbiaſſed dictates of their conſcience, Arius and his "aſſociates could ſcarcely have flattered themſelves "with the hopes of obtaining a majority of votes

"in favour of an hypotheſis ſo directly adverſe to the "two moſt popular opinions of the popular world." Why not? if a *large* majority of the Aſiatic biſhops befriended him, who ought to have attended in greater numbers than the Weſtern or other biſhops, Nice being ſituated in their province. Beſides, how much more ſhould their expectations have been raiſed, when the Catholics, according to Mr. Gibbon [Vol. II. p. 252], were divided into the two parties of the Tritheiſts and Sabellians? Theſe paſſages ſtrike me as inconſiſtent. Beſides, I am inclined to think that Mr. Gibbon had no authority, or at leaſt of any weight, for ſaying, that a *large majority* of the biſhops of Aſia favoured Arius. Sozomen ſays that there were only ſeventeen biſhops in all who favoured him. As for a *Sabellian party* in the council of Nice, I will venture to affirm that it is totally deſtitute of any authority among the ancients. For though Marcellus was *in fact* a Sabellian, yet we do not know poſitively that he adopted, or rather fell into this error before the council of Nice. Beſides, as holding three perſons (προσωποι), he would have denied his being a Sabellian, for the Sabellians only held one.

The

The Neſtorian Hereſy.

I SHALL now proceed to conſider what Mr. Gibbon has advanced concerning the Neſtorian hereſy. It will contribute much, I apprehend, to ſhorten what I mean to offer on this ſubject, by mentioning, in the firſt place, ſome hiſtorical facts, and their *exact dates*. For the proof of what I ſhall affirm, I refer my reader to the preface to the *ſecond* part of Marius Mercator, and the Auctarium of Theodoret, edition by Johannes Garnerius.

Neſtorius, after a vacancy of three months, was appointed by Theodoſius the younger to fill the ſee of Conſtantinople. He was, at the time, a *Preſbyter* of Antioch, much celebrated for his eloquence and learning. Upon the 10th of April, 428, he took poſſeſſion of his ſee. Anaſtaſius, a favourite Preſbyter, whom he brought with him from Antioch, held forth in a ſermon, in the preſence of Neſtorius, on the 22d of November following, that *Mary was not the mother of God*. Neſtorius himſelf, on the 25th of December following, maintained the ſame doctrine; and not only continued to do ſo in other diſcourſes,

but even tranſmitted them into Egypt among the Monks, in order to make proſelytes to his opinion. As an antidote to the poiſon, Cyril, biſhop of Alexandria in Egypt, wrote to the ſame Monks, ſome of whom had been infected by the plauſibility of the arguments of Neſtorius. This letter, when made known at Conſtantinople, whither it had been probably ſent by Cyril, greatly offended Neſtorius; poſſibly from his having treated him as an ignorant, or half-learned, perſon. Neſtorius ordered one Photius to anſwer Cyril's letter; and ſuborned ſome fugitive Monks, who, for their irregularities, had fled from Egypt, to accuſe Cyril to the Emperor of miſmanagement in the church, and of acting the tyrant in the ſtate. Marius Mercator *, who reſided at Conſtantinople, was probably the perſon who ſent the diſcourſes of Neſtorius to Celeſtine biſhop of Rome, who thereupon called a

* From the Pope's immediately holding a Synod upon the receipt of the three ſermons of Neſtorius, it is clear, that they were ſent tranſlated from the Greek into the Latin language: the Pope and Italian biſhops being ignorant of the Greek tongue: and the Conſtantinopolitan Greeks were equally ſo of the Latin. That the tranſlator was Marius Mercator is highly probable, from his reſiding at the time at Conſtantinople—from his being equally converſant in both languages—and from our knowing, that he actually did tranſlate them. That he was alſo the perſon who tranſmitted them to the biſhop of Rome, and gave the firſt accurate account of the buſineſs, is highly probable from the very active part he took in it.

Synod

Synod to take them into conſideration. The biſhops preſent were greatly incenſed at the intelligence. However, without proceeding to extremities, Celeſtine wrote a *ſynodical epiſtle* to Cyril to make enquiries concerning the truth of the intelligence: for, upon the information of a ſingle *layman*, perhaps it might not have been deemed *decent* to ſuppoſe that ſo learned and ſo reſpectable a perſonage, as the biſhop of Conſtantinople, had advanced ſuch an heretical opinion.

Shortly after the biſhop of Rome's letter, Cyril wrote a *ſynodical epiſtle* to Neſtorius about the beginning of Auguſt, 429, which was briefly anſwered by him about the beginning of September. Neſtorius wrote to Celeſtine about the ſame time concerning the Pelagians, and ſent to him three of his tracts. The object of his letter was to get the biſhop of Rome on his ſide. The tracts were ſent by Celeſtine to Caſſian in Gaul, to be expounded and anſwered. In February, 430, Cyril wrote another ſynodical epiſtle to Neſtorius, containing an expoſition of the faith; which was anſwered by Neſtorius in Lent. The tracts which were tranſmitted to Caſſian to be tranſlated, were

ſent

ſent back to Rome in about a year after by Caſſian, accompanied with another work of his on the Incarnation, to confute Neſtorius. Celeſtine, thereupon, calls a Synod at Rome, in which the opinions of Neſtorius were condemned. Thoſe of Cyril, contained in his two letters to Neſtorius, of which he had ſent copies to the biſhop of Rome, were approved: Neſtorius, unleſs he recanted after ten days notice, was to be depoſed: and Cyril was appointed the Pope's vicar to ſee that all matters might be carried on in regular order: and he was, beſides, inſtructed to draw up a creed for Neſtorius to ſubſcribe, in caſe he ſhould be inclined to recant.

There were many reaſons to induce Celeſtine to appoint Cyril his vicar. Firſt, his ſee being next in rank to that of Rome, the appointing ſo conſiderable a biſhop might be eſteemed a compliment to the Emperor himſelf, through whoſe partiality Neſtorius had been appointed to fill the ſee of Conſtantinople, in preference to ſome other candidates. He was, beſides, eſteemed the moſt learned biſhop of the Chriſtian church. Having been ſeventeen years a biſhop, the purity of his faith had been tried. Each of theſe reaſons

ſons in itſelf would have been ſufficient to juſtify the appointment: but when united, as was the fact, rendered it quite unimpeachable. But, independently of all this, John biſhop of Antioch would have been a very improper perſon to be appointed the biſhop of Rome's vicar upon this occaſion. For his friendſhip for Neſtorius might incline him to be partial, or even to conceal the truth. His having been educated under Theodore, the celebrated biſhop of Mopſueſtia, might juſtly have cauſed him to be ſuſpected of having imbibed the ſame heretical opinions from their common maſter. Beſides, he had been only two years biſhop of Antioch, and hitherto had not been diſtinguiſhed for his abilities and learning.

When Cyril received the biſhop of Rome's letter, appointing him his vicar, he called together a Synod of Egyptian biſhops at Alexandria, from whence he wrote his third *ſynodical epiſtle* to Neſtorius, informing him, that unleſs he recanted in ten days, after he had received notice—and acknowledged the confeſſion of faith, as ſet forth in his ſynodical epiſtle—and ſubſcribed the *twelve* capitula, commonly called anathemas,

anathemas, ſubjoined to it, as a complete recantation of his heretical tenets, he would be depoſed. This *ſynodical epiſtle* was dated the 3d of November, 430, and was delivered to Neſtorius the 7th of December of the ſame year.

When Celeſtine had diſpatched his letter from Rome in the beginning of Auguſt to Cyril, he ſent by the ſame meſſenger letters to John biſhop of Antioch, Juvenalis biſhop of Jeruſalem, and to five other principal biſhops, giving them notice of what was intended. Cyril, in like manner, ſent by the perſon, who carried the biſhop of Rome's letters to John and Juvenalis, private letters to them alſo, in order to diſcover how they were diſpoſed. John, being the friend of Neſtorius, warned him by letter of the impending ſtorm: and ſent him copies of Celeſtine's and Cyril's letters to himſelf; at the ſame time intreating him to give ſatisfaction, by ſaying, *Theotocos*, or *mother of God*—aſſuring him that it would be no degradation of his character, ſeeing that their common maſter, Theodore of Mopſueſtia, had not ſcrupled to act the ſame part—and, that if he did not give the required ſatisfaction, it was not difficult to foreſee

how

how the buſineſs would terminate. The learned Theodoret being at this time at Antioch, and from a peculiar phraſeology in this letter, never omitted by him when ſpeaking of Cyril, there can remain little doubt but that he was the compoſer of it, and that John only put his name to it. Theodoret, beſides, claimed it afterwards as his own. So that we have here the teſtimony of two of the moſt celebrated of the party of Neſtorius, in what manner the Catholic church would determine concerning the orthodoxy of his tenets. Nay, we have Neſtorius's own opinion to the ſame purport, in a letter from him to Celeſtius, the friend of Pelagius*. How differently is this tranſaction repreſented by Mr. Gibbon and Doctor Prieſtley. With them all is precipitation, violence, and partiality, ſpringing from factious motives, and the envy of Cyril againſt Neſtorius.

Upon the receipt of John's letter, Neſtorius aſſembled his friends to conſult with them reſpecting the expediency of the meaſures which it would be proper

* Marius Mercator, p. 84.

for him to purſue. The reſult of the meeting was, that, inſtead of adviſing him to ſubmit, agreeably to the opinion of his friend, John of Antioch, he ſhould petition the Emperor to aſſemble a general council to decide upon the buſineſs: in which his Conſtantinopolitan friends flattered themſelves that they ſhould be able to convict Cyril of the *Arian hereſy*, for *confounding* the divine and human ſubſiſtences, and thus turn the tables upon his adverſary. From the Emperor's partiality to Neſtorius, he eaſily obtained the aſſembling of a *general council*. Beſides what concerned himſelf, Neſtorius accuſed Cyril of impiety and ſeditious practices againſt the Emperor. This latter accuſation accounts for the angry expreſſions contained in a private letter from Theodoſius to Cyril which accompanied the official one. All this had been brought about before the four biſhops, who had been diſpatched by Cyril after the Egyptian ſynod with the determination of the biſhop of Rome, and Cyril's *third ſynodical epiſtle* containing the terms of ſubmiſſion, had arrived at Conſtantinople: the letters for convening the general council being dated the 19th of November 430, whereas the deputed

biſhops did not arrive at Conſtantinople till the 5th of December. Had Theodoſius known of the determination of the biſhop of Rome, perhaps he might not have yielded to the petition of Neſtorius, who might reaſonably flatter himſelf with the iſſue of it, well knowing what money could effect with a court minion, who would probably be appointed moderator, or preſident of the aſſembly.

In the official letter for convening the aſſembly, the patriarchs and metropolitans were commanded, that laying aſide all pretexts, to aſſemble at Epheſus on the 7th of June of the following year; and to bring with them thoſe biſhops, and others whom they would think neceſſary. Notwithſtanding, however, the peremptorineſs of the order, there were ſeveral biſhops abſent on the appointed day. Juvenalis of Jeruſalem arrived the 11th of June. John, with his Antiochenians, proceeded more leiſurely, or rather intentionally delayed his arrival till aſſured of the depoſition of Neſtorius. He, however, had diſpatched before him two of his metropolitans, Alexander biſhop of Apamea and Alexander biſhop of Hierapolis,

who arrived at Epheſus the 18th of June. Upon the biſhops, who had already aſſembled, complaining to them of the extraordinary delay of John, they, not *once*, but *oftener*, told the Fathers, that they were ordered by John to acquaint them, that ſhould he not arrive in four or five days, no longer to defer opening the ſynod, and doing what was needful. The biſhops thereupon waited till the fifth day after, when, finding that there was no appearance of his arrival, and it being rumoured that he intentionally loitered upon the road, in order not to be preſent in an aſſembly in which his friend muſt neceſſarily be condemned, they opened the ſynod, and, after going through the uſual forms, unanimouſly condemned and depoſed Neſtorius.

The Fathers, who ſuppoſed that John had abſented himſelf from the ſynod to avoid the diſagreeable neceſſity of concurring with the other biſhops in the condemnation of his friend, were entirely miſtaken in their idea: for his object was, that the Fathers ſhould condemn Neſtorius, and that he, upon his arrival, in a factious council of his Oriental biſhops,

ſhould

ſhould condemn and depoſe, for hereſy, Cyril, and thus ſecure to himſelf the preſidency over the remaining biſhops.

Upon the depoſition of Neſtorius, Count Irenæus, his particular friend, as alſo of Theodoret who was the life and ſoul of the Neſtorian faction, ſet off from Epheſus to meet John of Antioch, who arrived five days after the depoſition of Neſtorius. Immediately upon his arrival, without wiping the duſt off his ſhoes, he aſſembled a council of his Oriental biſhops in the inn, in which Cyril was condemned for teaching in his capitula the hereſies of Arius, Eunomius, and Apolinaris; as alſo Memnon, biſhop of Epheſus, for his violent carriage: and he, moreover, excommunicated all the other Fathers, unleſs, by a fixed day, forſaking the party of Cyril and Memnon, they ſhould join themſelves to his. By depoſing Memnon, he hoped to have had an opportunity of ordaining another biſhop in his ſtead, through whoſe means he might be able to have had the city of Epheſus at his devotion: but in this he was diſappointed, the doors of the cathedral being kept ſhut againſt him; neither could they be forced by the imperial troops, who

attended

attended Candidian the Emperor's vicar. So highly irritated were the citizens of Epheſus on account of ſuch ſhameful proceedings. However, John, in his letter to Theodoſius giving an account of his conduct, ſadly complains that the church was kept ſhut againſt him, *whither he was going to pray for the Emperor.* But had he got poſſeſſion, there can be no doubt, but that he would have inſtantly ordained another biſhop in the ſtead of Memnon, whom he had illegally and informally depoſed. What induced John to be in ſuch a hurry about this buſineſs, was, leſt, by the arrival of the pope's legates, who were daily expected, his factious deſigns would have been thwarted: therefore, he having arrived on a Saturday, there was no time to be loſt, leſt they might arrive on the day following, when no buſineſs could be entered upon.

The Emperor was kept in the dark concerning all this buſineſs by the deceitful accounts ſent to him by his vicar, and by Neſtorius: the true relation ſent by the ſynod not having, through the management of Candidian, come to his hands. At laſt, however, the ſynod contrived to forward a true account to their

friends

friends at Conſtantinople by means of a beggar, who conveyed the precious papers in a reed. The Emperor, who was a truly virtuous character, when duly apprized of the partiality and miſconduct of his vicar Candidian, immediately diſgraced him, and diſpatched Count John to Epheſus to be vicar in his ſtead.

The pope's legates arrived at Epheſus the 10th of July. The day following, having examined the proceedings reſpecting the depoſition of Neſtorius, they approved of them. On the 16th they concurred with the other biſhops in acquitting Cyril and Memnon of the charges laid againſt them: as alſo, the day after, in depoſing John biſhop of Antioch, for his factions and irregular conduct. Upon this, John wrote to Theodoſius, expoſtulating upon the irregularity of the proceedings againſt him, and ſent Count Irenæus to Conſtantinople to negociate. The Emperor, at a loſs how to determine from the different relations of Irenæus and what the council had written upon the ſame ſubject, ordered *ſeven* biſhops of either party to go to Chalcedon, that he himſelf might hear both parties, and determine whether John of Antioch or Cyril was in the wrong: for, before the *fourteen* biſhops

biſhops, whom he had ordered to Chalcedon, had arrived there, he had agreed with the council in the depoſition of Neſtorius.

After the biſhops had arrived at Chalcedon, he gave audience *five* times to thoſe who ſupported John of Antioch: after which, finding how little they had to ſay in ſupport of their party, he diſgracefully ordered them to return to their churches; not permitting them to be preſent, notwithſtanding their repeated efforts to obtain it, at the ordination of the new biſhop, who was to be choſen in the ſtead of the depoſed Neſtorius. As for Cyril, he returned to Egypt the 30th of October, acquitted by the Emperor of what was laid to his charge: whereas, John returned to Antioch excommunicated.

Celeſtine, however, being intent upon reſtoring unity in the Catholic church, entreated Theodoſius to exert himſelf to the ſame end. After conſulting with the new biſhop of Conſtantinople, ſome other biſhops, and the clergy, the Emperor preſcribed the following terms to Cyril and John of Antioch; namely, that John ſhould agree to the depoſition of Neſtorius, and anathematize his tenets; upon doing

which

which he ſhould be reſtored to the communion of the Catholics; and that Cyril ſhould forget his wrongs. He beſides ordered, that if Cyril and John did not ſubmit to theſe terms, that they ſhould be brought to Nicomedia, and there remain, without ſeeing the Emperor, until they had agreed. After ſome management and artful conduct on the part of John and the Orientals, they choſe at laſt to ſubmit to the preſcribed terms.

Neſtorius, having permiſſion to retire whitherſoever he pleaſed, made choice of the monaſtery of Euprepia near Antioch; when, after a reſidence of about four years, his quondam friend John of Antioch, for his turbulent conduct, inſtigated Theodoſius to baniſh him; who, thereupon, had him removed to the Oaſis, or iſlands in the ſandy ocean of the Libyan Deſert; where he met with new diſaſters, and probably died about 440.

If the reader will compare this ſimple ſtatement of facts with what Mr. Gibbon and Dr. Prieſtley have written upon the ſame ſubject, he will be doubtleſs much ſurprized at the very different complexion the relation bears in their writings. Had I entered into

more particulars, the oppoſition would have appeared ſtill more ſtriking. I ſhall now proceed to a few remarks upon ſome things advanced by theſe gentlemen, and ſhall give the precedence to the layman, who appears to me to have paid more attention to this controverſy than the theologian. But there are ſo many errors and inaccuracies even in his relation, that to point out each might be deemed hypercritical, and would certainly exhauſt the patience of the reader. I will therefore confine myſelf to a few.

Vol. iv. p. 551, Note, Mr. Gibbon calls Neſtorius a *monk* of Antioch: he was however a preſbyter. In note 34, he ſeems to tax Cyril's veracity, which is more than any of his enemies, not even the lying Theodoret, has dared to do.

P. 553. Mr. Gibbon ſays, that Neſtorius "drew his "inadequate ſimilies from the conjugal partnerſhips of "life." This I have not perceived in his ſermons. He certainly acknowledged the union to be much more intimate. Theodore of Mopſueſtia made uſe of this ſimile.

Ib. "In the ſchool of Alexandria, he [Cyril] "had imbibed and profeſſed the incarnation of "the *one nature*." The idea intended to be conveyed

veyed by this paſſage I do not pretend to underſtand. In Cyril's language it would mean the incarnation of one ſubſiſtence, namely, the Word.

Ib. "After a ſhort *correſpondence*, in which the "*rival* prelates diſguiſed their *hatred* in the hollow "language of reſpect, and charity." The correſpondence on the part of Cyril was *official*, as was that of Neſtorius alſo, except perhaps his firſt ſhort epiſtle. "Rival:" that Cyril did not look upon Neſtorius as his rival is clear from his letters—to Neſtorius—to a *common* friend at Conſtantinople, whom he aſſures, that the preſervation of the faith was his ſole object, and not any enmity to Neſtorius.—His letters alſo to his agents at Conſtantinople, which, on this head, may be deemed deciſive, hold forth the ſame language.

Ib. "From the Eaſt, more eſpecially *from Antioch*, "he [Cyril] obtained the ambiguous councils of to-"leration and ſilence, which were addreſſed to both "parties, while *they favoured the cauſe of Neſtorius*." He received a letter to this effect from Acacius of Berœa. As yet he had not written to John of Antioch; but when he did, John's letter to Neſtorius, which was ſuppoſed to convey the ſentiments of the Eaſt, ſo

far *from favouring Neſtorius*, recommended *recantation*; as their common maſter Theodore had thought fit to do in the preſence of Neſtorius himſelf for the ſame identical offence.

Ib. "The *vanity* of Celeſtine was *flattered* by the "appeal; and the *partial* verſion of a monk *decided* "*the faith* of the pope." Before Celeſtine received the verſion of the monk [Caſſian] *his* faith was determined, as appears from his letter cited by Cyril. Whether the verſion was *partial* or not, I cannot affirm, having never ſeen it: but, as Mr. Gibbon affirms that it was, be it ſo. Why Celeſtine's vanity ſhould be flattered by the appeal (but there was in fact no appeal), I do not ſee. There are *ſeveral* inſtances of ſuch appeals during the Pelagian Hereſy, which had juſt preceded the Neſtorian. It had, doubtleſs, been cuſtomary, for ſome time, for biſhops, even metropolitans, nay even patriarchs, to give intelligence to the pope, reſpecting extraordinary occurrences. Neſtorius himſelf did ſo during this controverſy, with reſpect to the Pelagians. Nay, the "lordly" Cyril alſo, who preſided in the ſecond ſee, did the ſame with regard to Neſtorius.

P. 554.

P. 554, Mr. Gibbon calls the pope's ſentence *raſh* and *illegal*. This is more than the contemporary writers, not even Theodoret the perſonal enemy of Cyril, have ventured to aſſert.

Ib. "Theſe bold aſſertions [the twelve capitula] "are indelibly tinged with the colours of the Apoli- "narian Hereſy: but the ſerious, and perhaps the "ſincere profeſſions of Neſtorius, have ſatisfied the "*wiſer* and *leſs partial* theologians of the preſent "times." That the theologians of the preſent times are either *wiſer* or *leſs partial* than thoſe of the fifth century may, I apprehend, be well doubted. They are ever veering in their opinions, and their tenets are ſelf repugnant: not ſo thoſe of the age to which I allude. The diſtinction between the Apolinarian Hereſy and Catholiciſm has been already pointed out.

Ib. Note 39. "They [capitula] have *never* been "*approved* by the church." Marius Mercator, in confuting the twelve capitula of Neſtorius which were compoſed by him in oppoſition to thoſe of Cyril, ſays, "We have firſt put down the capitula of Cyril,

"which

" which the Romiſh church *approved* of; after which " thoſe of Neſtorius, both rendered from the Greek " into the Latin language." Nunc Epiſcopi Cyrilli priora poſuimus, quæ Romana eccleſia approbavit vero judicio: et poſteriora Neſtorii, ex Græco in Latinum, utraque verſa. Neſtorii Blaſphemiarum capitula Marius Mercator, part 11. p. 116.

Except the firſt inaccuracy, all the others are contained in a ſingle paragraph, and the notes ſubjoined to it, and I might have extended them. I do not mean by this to infer, that Mr. Gibbon is ſo inaccurate a writer, or ſo ill informed an hiſtorian, that no dependence is to be placed upon his relations. My opinion of this writer is very different. His work, upon the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, in my weak apprehenſion, eaſily puts him at the head of all the hiſtorical writers of this age, both for depth of thought and extenſive erudition; and I make no ſcruple to affirm, that in theology, in as much as concerns Chriſtianity, he eaſily bears away the palm from all his contemporary divines. Had he been initiated into the doctrine of the Subſiſtencies, his ſprightly-

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manner of treating it would, no doubt, have greatly amuſed a certain claſs of readers: at preſent they muſt put up with a more languid relation.

Moreover, in all thoſe errors into which I apppre-hend this ingenious writer has fallen, he only follows the moſt celebrated modern divines. Had he conſulted John Garnerius, the learned editor of Marius Mercator, who upwards of a century ago had pointed out thoſe miſtakes of his predeceſſors concerning the Neſtorian Hereſy, and which are ſtill perſiſted in by all the modern Proteſtant writers, as well as by the Catholics, he would ſurely have avoided them. This unacquaintedneſs of both Catholic and Proteſtant writers with ſo capital a critic, I impute to a ſingle cauſe, namely, the moderns being entirely ignorant of the import of the phraſe *the union according to the Subſiſtence*, rendered it impoſſible for them to conceive in what conſiſted the difference between Neſtorius and the Catholics. The ſermons of Neſtorius, with which the ſecond part of Marius Mercator begins, ſolely referring to this controverſy, being therefore an abracadabra to them, they raſhly ſuppoſed, that the difference between the parties was only verbal,

and might think, that purſuing the controverſy, through the pages of Mercator, would be only a needleſs loſs of time. Moreover, unleſs authors are cited, no matter what ſterling knowledge they contain, it is almoſt impoſſible that they ſhould be known, and of courſe ſought after. Johan. Garnerius is unnoticed by Doctor Prieſtley in his Biographical Chart; by Doctor Playfair in his Biographical Index; and in the General Biographical Dictionary: he is mentioned however by Moreri as a very learned divine.

It appears very unaccountable to me, how any philoſophical writer could ever *ſuppoſe* that diſputes, *merely verbal*, ſhould be proſecuted with ſo much warmth, as we find to have been the caſe among the ancient Chriſtians; is it not tantamount to ſuppoſing an effect without a proportionate cauſe, which is the ſame thing as no cauſe at all. And yet this is affirmed by almoſt all the moderns, whether philoſophers, or bigots, to have been the caſe with regard to the Arian, and Neſtorian, Hereſies. Should they not have rather imagined, that there was ſomething *hidden*, ſomething *unknown* to them, which gave riſe to

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the controverſy, rather than affirm an effect without a proportionate cauſe, which is putting the axe to the root of all religion, namely, the being of a God: it being acknowledged that if any thing can be ſuppoſed to exiſt without a cauſe, the ſtrongeſt argument in proof of a Deity is annihilated: and moral effects, as well as phyſical ones, require moral cauſes. Now the doctrine of the Subſiſtencies being, I truſt, eſtabliſhed, we have a cauſe proportionate to the effect produced, whether we conſider the Arian or Neſtorian Hereſy. The firſt conſiſted in denying two beings to be eternal whom the Catholics thought to be ſo; and this muſt be allowed to have been capable of producing a very conſiderable effect. With regard to the Neſtorians, their denying the *union according to the Subſiſtenee* between the God-Word and the Man, it followed of courſe, that the God-Word did not ſuffer for us: and the doctrines of original Sin, and Satisfaction, having been previouſly eſtabliſhed in conſequence of the Pelagian and Celeſtian Hereſies, it followed, that if the God-Word was not joined to the Man according to the Subſiſtence, that he would *not* have ſuffered; and that in this caſe all mankind muſt for ever

remain in hell. Such a notion, however ill grounded, muſt ſurely be admitted to have been capable of producing very great effects. But to proceed with Mr. Gibbon.

P. 553. "The unſucceſsful *competitors* of Neſto-" rius indulged their pious or perſonal reſentment." From this paſſage it might be inferred, that the clergy were the firſt who began the outcry againſt Neſtorius, whereas it was *begun* by the laity—then by the monks —then by the preſbyters—and laſtly by the biſhops. This alſo ſhews, that the rabble in thoſe days were better judges of ſound divinity than the moſt learned of the moderns.

P. 558. Mr. Gibbon apprehends, that indifference and contempt on the part of the Emperor would have been the moſt effectual means of bringing the parties (Cyril and Neſtorius) to a reconciliation. Such obſervations are frequent among the moderns; but they are ſurely ill founded; otherwiſe the Hereſies of Sabellius, and Paul of Samoſate (not to mention the Gnoſtics) which broke forth in the third century, to which the Emperors, being Heathens, were entirely indifferent, would have quickly ſubſided. Ne-

verthelefs,

vertheleſs, no reconciliation took place, nor was ever likely, among the diſputants.

P. 560. Mr. Gibbon adopts the notion, which is likewiſe entertained by the generality of the Proteſtants, that Cyril was profuſe in his largeſſes, in order to ſucceed in his deſigns againſt Neſtorius: and yet I think this is very doubtful. Neſtorius and Theodoret impute it to him, but no other of the contemporary ancients: as theſe were parties, and not remarkable for veracity, their imputation ſhould be little regarded. According to Neſtorius, and John of Antioch, the opinion of the Catholic world was in favour of Cyril: Why then corrupt? Cyril being an avaricious man, and of the age of ſixty, knew too well the value of money to diſburſe it uſeleſsly. If his object were to corrupt, ſurely Candidian, or Count John, the Imperial vicars, ſhould have been the perſons attempted; but they, as well as all the other court minions, were entirely againſt Cyril. It cannot be imagined that hiring a mob could have been an object with him: a mob could only have been uſeful for the moment, and might have been inimical to him the next. Men of ſixty ſeldom place any confidence

in mobs. Is it to be ſuppoſed, that the monks Dalmatius and Eutyches were ſupplied with caſh by the beggar who carried Cyril's and the Catholics' letter to Conſtantinople, to enable them to bribe? This would be abſurd. But it appears from Cyril's deacon's letter, note 50, that the Epiſcopal exchequer at Alexandria had incurred a debt of 60,000 l. But ſuch a debt will not appear very extraordinary, when it is conſidered, that, beſides fifty biſhops, *various other eccleſiaſtics* had accompanied Cyril, who was abſent above four months from Alexandria.

The new biſhop of Conſtantinople, Maximian, in the juſt cited note, is ſaid to be the creature of Cyril. However, Cyril's object for that ſee was Proclus, who ſucceeded Maximian, who was in fact appointed by Theodoſius.

I ſhall now proceed to Doctor Prieſtley, remarking only upon a few paſſages:

Vol. ii. p. 500. "It was no longer doubted among "them [the Catholics], that their was a Trinity in "the Divine Nature; or that one of the perſons in "the Trinity, viz. the ſecond, or the Logos, was united "to the man Jeſus; ſo that in Chriſt there were two

" natures [Subſiſtencies] the divine and human. But " it had not been fully determined, that theſe two " natures made one perſon." The laſt period ſhould be, *but it had not been fully determined that Chriſt had but one perſon:* that is, intelligent principle. The Catholics never determined the two natures to be one Perſon: no, nor even one Subſiſtence, as they held, that This was always the doctrine of the Catholic church, and therefore unneceſſary to be determined. See Cyril's letter, quoted Pref. to Marius Mercator, p. 35.

Ib. " It may be queſtioned, however, whether " Neſtorius ever held this opinion [of the Word " dwelling in Jeſus], or had any clear conception of " it at the time he drew upon him the notice of his " brethren. As on the other ſide it may be queſ- " tioned whether the Catholics themſelves held any " opinion upon the ſubject that was really different " from this, till, in the courſe of controverſy, they " came to conſider it was heretical. For when it is " allowed that there are two natures [Subſiſtencies] " in Chriſt, ſo different as thoſe of *God* and *Man*, all " the terms that could be contrived to expreſs the

" manner

" manner of their union muſt be equally deſtitute " of idea. Conſequently, when the Catholics did " afterwards determine that theſe two natures [Sub- " ſiſtences] make but one perſon, they did not " in reality add any new propoſition to their creed, " becauſe no new ideas can be affixed to the terms. " We are now therefore to conſider a mere contro- " verſy about *words*; [pray attend reader] but which " was the cauſe of as much animoſity, as if it had " related to the moſt intelligible and important of " things." Here then we have Doctor Prieſtley's opinion that the Neſtorian controverſy was only *a diſpute of words*, and conſequently of his believing in effects without proportionate cauſes; which, were it true, would ſap the foundation of natural and revealed religion, which no one is more ſenſible of than the ingenious Doctor himſelf. It is clear from this paſſage, that the Doctor is unacquainted with the Neſtorian Hereſy. After the term Nature, I have put Subſiſtencies, in crotchets, to make the meaning clearer. It is alſo evident from theſe paſſages, that the Doctor had not an accurate idea of the term Nature.

P. 501.

P. 501. After mentioning Neſtorius's ſucceeding Sicinnius in the ſee of Conſtantinople, and bringing with him from Antioch the preſbyter Anaſtaſius, he ſays, "This Anaſtaſius, in one of his ſermons, re-"proved ſome of the common people for calling the "Virgin Mary *the mother of God*; ſaying, that it "was more proper to call her the *mother of Chriſt*, "for that God could not be the offspring of a hu-"man being. Complaint being brought of this to "Neſtorius, he openly approved of what had been "aſſerted by his preſbyter; and added, as it is ſaid, 'that a child of *two* or *three* months old could not be 'a God;' meaning that what was born of Mary was "mere man, though a divine nature was added to him "*afterwards*."

"Afterwards." Neſtorius held that the Word was *added* (to uſe the Doctor's term) to the man in the womb of Mary *at the moment of conception*: ſee the ninth capitula of Neſtorius: but he denied that the child of *two* or *three* months old was a God, becauſe he denied the *union according to the Subſiſtence*. Beſides, it is probable that Neſtorius was *preſent* when

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the offenſive words, *mother of Chriſt*, were uttered, agreeably to the *expreſs* teſtimony of Cyril; which is not contradicted by what Socrates ſays, though Cyril makes Dorotheus, a biſhop, to have been the firſt who mentioned them; but Socrates aſcribes them to Anaſtaſius. "That a child two or three months old could "not be a God," was ſpoken at Epheſus before the opening of the council there, and was deemed a great advance in his heretical depravity.

The reader is not to imagine, that the ancient Catholics were ſuch enthuſiaſts as to believe that the eternal God-Word derived his origin from a woman. No, they denied it as ſtrenuouſly as any Unitarian whatever. They held, that as the God-Word was united to the fleſh in like manner as the *ſoul*, in this ſtate he might be ſaid to be born a ſecond time (having been firſt born of the Father) in like manner as the ſoul is ſaid to be born of a woman, though by no means deriving its nature from the ſex. Now this *ſecond* birth of the Word was denied by Neſtorius, in conſequence of his denying *the union accoring to the Subſiſtence*. So that the *ſecond* birth of the Word, though

though perhaps few Catholics now-a-days know it, was equally an article of faith with the ancient Catholics, as the real Preſence, Original Sin, &c.

The reader will recollect, that the God-Word was not united to the man *quite* ſo cloſely as the ſoul to the body: this would have been *confounding* the Subſiſtencies. But, as already obſerved, human language being inadequate to expreſs the idea, Cyril was forced to make uſe of ſuch a ſimile as came neareſt to it.

P. 505. The Doctor ſays, that "Cyril drew up "*twelve* propoſitions, and *as many* anathemas." This is ſaying that they were different; whereas they are only different names of the *ſame thing*.

P. 508. "At this council [Epheſus] the *twelve* "propoſitions were confirmed, the ſubſtance of which "is briefly expreſſed in the following explication ſub-"joined to them: 'The Holy Virgin is the mother 'of God, not that the nature [Subſiſtence] of the 'Logos, or the [his] divinity took its commencement 'in [of] the Holy Virgin; but becauſe that ſacred 'body, animated by a reaſonable ſoul, to which the 'Logos *of God* was ſubſtantially united, was carnally 'born of her.' That the *twelve* propoſitions of Cyril

were confirmed at the council of Epheſus, I apprehend the Doctor has no authority for. That the cited explication is *ſub*joined to the *twelve* propoſitions is ſo far from being the fact, that the propoſitions are not *at all* contained in the letter from which the citation is taken; but are contained in a *ſubſequent* letter, written ſeveral months after. Neither is the Doctor acccurate in his expoſition: inſtead of, "*in* the Holy "Virgin," it ſhould be *of* the Holy Virgin—"*the* "divinity," ſhould be *his* divinity: theſe I have, for the conveniency of the reader, marked in crotchets: the ſecond *of God* is redundant.

For the ſatisfaction of the learned I ſhall ſubjoin the paſſage in the original, with Mercator's expoſition, of which, for the conveniency of the unlearned, I will give an exact rendering.

Ουΐω τεθαρσηκασι [οι παΐερες] θεοτοκον ειπειν την αγιαν παρθενον· ουχ της τυ λογυ φυσεως, ηΐοι της θεοτηΐος αυΐυ την αρχην τυ ειναι λαβουσης εκ της αγιας παρθενυ· αλλ' ως γενηθενΐος εξ αυτης, τυ αγιυ σωμαΐος, ψυχωθενΐος τε λογικως, ω̃ και καθ υποϛασιν ενωθεις ο λογος, γεγεννησθαι λεγεΐα, καΐα σαρκα. Secunda Sancti Cyrilli Epiſtola ad Neſtorium.

Marius

Marius Mercator's Verſion.

Sic fidenter Dei puerperam, id eſt, θεοτοκον pronuntiaverunt [patres] virginem ſanctam: non quod natura Verbi Dei vel divinitas ejus ex illa, ut eſſet, initium ſumpſerit, ſed tanquam ex ipſa ſumpto corpore anima rationali animato, cui ſecundum eſſentiam unitus Deus Verbum, ſecundum carnem creditur natus.

Which may be thus rendered:

"Thus [the Fathers] confidently pronounced the "Holy Virgin to be *Theotocos*, or the mother of God: "not that the Subſiſtence or the Divinity of the God-"Word took its beginning from her; but that the "holy body, animated with a rational ſoul, was born "of her, to which the Word, being united according "to the Subſiſtence, is believed to have been born "according to the fleſh."

The reader will obſerve, that υποστασιν is rendered by the term *eſſentiam*, which ſhews that this term alſo means ſubſiſtence in its theological ſenſe; and that *eſſentia*, *ſubſtantia*, and *ſubſiſtentia* are ſynonimous terms, according to Marius Mercator; υποστασις being indifferently rendered by him by them.

It may be fairly inferred from theſe two laſt quotations from Doctor Prieſtley, that he never ſaw the twelve anathemas or propoſitions of Cyril, otherwiſe it is difficult to account for his ſaying, that there were *twelve* propoſitions, and *as many* anathemas, being only two names of the ſame thing; and that they were contained in the *ſecond* letter of Cyril to Neſtorius, when they are contained in the *third*. I have alſo my ſuſpicions, that Mr. Gibbon never ſaw them either; though, as the reader has ſeen, he ſpeaks of them as if he had.

P. 509. Here the Doctor ſuppoſes there were two decrees paſſed at the council of Epheſus concerning the Pelagians: one *in favour* of them, the other *againſt* them. The firſt, however, was not paſſed at Epheſus, but at a council held by Neſtorius two years before at Conſtantinople. Marius Mercator, p. 62.

P. 510. The Doctor ſays, "But [Theodoſius] being "prepoſſeſſed againſt Neſtorius by his ſiſter Pulcheria, "he for ſome time forbade his friends to come nearer "than Chalcedon, ſaying, that he would *only* ſee the "deputies." What authority the Doctor had for this paſſage

paſſage I know not. As to his forbidding the Neſtorian biſhops to approach nearer than Chalcedon there was no peculiar hardſhip in it, the Catholics being under a ſimilar inhibition: and that they were not treated anywiſe diſreſpectfully, fully appears from their *own* letter to their friends at Epheſus, written a few days after their arrival: in which they gave a flattering account of their reception by Theodoſius, and of his rough treatment of the Catholic deputies, and thence argue the probability of their ſucceſs.

Ib. "He [Theodoſius] however was ſo much "preſſed, that at length he heard them all, but de- "cided againſt Neſtorius." In this the Doctor is inaccurate: for the fate of Neſtorius, as is evident from the firſt letter of the Neſtorian deputies to their friends at Epheſus, had been determined *before* they had arrived at Chalcedon.

Ib. "After this, by writing letters to Cyril and "John of Antioch, he [Theodoſius] *procured* a recon- "ciliation between them, and *at length* John joined "in the depoſition of Neſtorius." This is inaccurate. The Emperor *commanded* a reconciliation, *before* which,

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as already obſerved, John was not only to ſubſcribe the *depoſition* of Neſtorius, but alſo to pronounce an anathema againſt his doctrines.

Ib. "In all this *it muſt be acknowledged*, that the "good-natured Emperor was governed chiefly by the "princeſs Pulcheria." Yes, truly, it might, if handed down upon good authority; but to whom are we referred? To Evagrius, who flouriſhed about one hundred and fifty years after; but who, in fact, mentions no ſuch circumſtance: and to Nicephorus, who flouriſhed in the fourteenth century, and therefore is no authority.

I ſhall proceed no farther reſpecting Neſtorius, though the ſubſequent paragraph contains many errors.

P. 522. "But ſtill the fact ſhews" [a council of five hundred biſhops acquitting Eutyches, who had been condemned at the council of Chalcedon, where ſix hundred and thirty biſhops were preſent], "that the "biſhops were *always* ready to go with the court; "that is, to be ſwayed by their intereſt, and there- "fore, that the real faith of the Chriſtian church in "*any* period, or even the opinions of the biſhops "themſelves, are by no means to be collected from

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"the decrees of theſe ſolemn councils." Is not this a very unguarded, not to ſay raſh, aſſertion? What! the Chriſtian biſhops to have been *at all times* temporiſing. It is impoſſible, it is groundleſs. The Arian controverſy contradicts it. The Eutychian controverſy contradicts it. And, finally, the controverſy between the Emperor Juſtinian and Pope Vigilius, concerning the *three* chapters and their authors, contradicts it.

In the firſt four general councils there appears to have been no improper interference on the part of government in favour of Catholiciſm. With reſpect to the faith, the Catholics appear to have been unanimous and conſiſtent after the council of Nice. I admit that there were ſome Neſtorians in the council of Epheſus, and to theſe *temporiſing* may be juſtly imputed: but, as in the preſent day, there were then many Diſſenters who could ſwallow the pill.

That the Chriſtians were in general Catholics, may be inferred, independently of the teſtimony of Sozomen, B. iii. c. xiii., from their immediately raiſing an outcry againſt every doctrine which tended to ſap it. I will not affirm, that there were not temporiſers among

among the Catholic biſhops; but hitherto I have ſeen no proof of it. Were the Doctor well grounded in the obſervation which is the ſubject of this remark, it might, I apprehend, be juſtly deemed a more deciſive argument againſt Chriſtianity, than all that Mr. Gibbon has written againſt it. Yet I am perſuaded that the ingenious Doctor had no ſuch view in committing it to print. His prejudice againſt religious eſtabliſhments, perhaps, did not make him aware of the conſequence.

P. 534. "In the council of Nice it was determined, "that the Son was *of the ſame Subſtance* with the Fa- "ther; in that of Conſtantinople, that both the Son "and Holy Spirit are, in all reſpects, *equal* to the "Father; in that of Epheſus, that the *two natures* "of Chriſt make but *one perſon*; and in that of Chal- "cedon, that theſe natures continue to be two, not- "withſtanding this perſonal, or hypoſtatical union "between them."

What Dr. Prieſtley has ſaid in this paſſage is very inaccurate. At the firſt general council (Nice, 325) the Son was declared to be *Homoouſios, or of one Subſiſtence with the Father*; at the ſecond (Conſtanti-

nople, 381) the Holy Spirit was declared to be *God.* At the third (Epheſus, 431) Neſtorius was condemned for denying *the union according to the Subſiſtence:* there was no doctrinal point determined at this council, though the moderns univerſally affirm it. At the fourth (Chalcedon, 451) it was determined, that there were *two natures,* that is *Subſiſtencies, in Jeſus Chriſt, and only one perſon.* The firſt was in conſequence of the Eutychian Hereſy, which held, that there was only *one Subſiſtence,* or *nature,* in Chriſt; the unchangeable God-Word being *unchangeably* changed (as he fooliſhly aſſerted, according to Theodoret) into fleſh. The determining *one* perſon was againſt the Neſtorians, who, like the modern *orthodox,* taught *two* perſons in Jeſus Chriſt, the divine and human; and demonſtrates theſe, whether Catholics or Proteſtants, to be equally Heretics.

P. 535. The Doctor ſays, "That the Son is of the "ſame ſubſtance of the Father, was an inference from "his having been originally the proper reaſon of the "Father." And again, "But that any *attribute* "ſhould become a *ſeparate perſon,* and eſpecially that "the Being whoſe attribute it was, ſhould *not,* after

" this event, be deprived of it, is a manifeſt abſurdity." Doubtleſs it is. But ſuch a notion I will venture to aſſert was never acknowledged by the Catholic church. Upon this hypotheſis, which Biſhop Horſley affirms to be an *invention* of Dr. Prieſtley's, is laid the entire ſyſtematic part of the Doctor's theology againſt the Catholics; and which, as being unfounded, the whole muſt fall with it. Now, that the Catholic church never held that the Word was an attribute of the Deity, is evident from their always holding him to be *ſelf-ſubſiſtent*. Neither was the Father deprived of his Wiſdom, by their being declared to be Homoouſios, or one Subſiſtence.

Before I take leave of Dr. Prieſtley I cannot help noticing, that his *ſhort* account of the Pelagian Hereſy abounds with inaccuracies; and I will take the liberty of recommending for his peruſal the firſt Part of Marius Mercator cura Garnerii, as containing a fund of accurate knowledge concerning the Pelagian and Celeſtian Hereſies. Having made uſe of ſuch a ſtrong term as *abounds* (though I truſt that the reader would by this time take my word), I think it proper to ſhew it by a few inſtances.

P. 478. Dr. Prieſtley ſays, "It was *in the reign of* "*Honorius* that the Pelagian Hereſy *took its riſe*; a "controverſy which produced ſuch laſting conſe- "quences in the Weſtern part of the world, though "they were but little known in the Eaſt. To this we "owe the doctrines of Original Sin, Predeſtination, "and that of the neceſſity of *Supernatural Grace* to "every good thought, word, and action; and ulti- "mately that of Atonement; doctrines of which we "find *no trace in any former period*." We are informed however by Marius Mercator *, that Rufinus introduced this Hereſy into Rome, *from the Eaſt*, in the popedom of Anaſtaſius, which commenced in 398, and terminated in 402: and as it had been, *ſome time before*, maintained in Cilicia by Theodore of Mopſueſtia, it is highly probable, that it took its riſe *before the reign of Honorius*, which commenced 395 †. That there were *ſome traces* of the three firſt of theſe doctrines in *former periods* is evident from a ſcore of paſſages in Marius Mercator ‡.

P. 478-9. The Doctor ſays, "Pelagius was a Britiſh

* Comm. Adv. Hær. Pel. et Cel. p. 30.
† Ib. 2d Part, p. 260, c. 2.
‡ Ib. Part 1ſt, p. 63. 398. 428, 429.

" *Monk*, Celeſtius an *Iriſh Monk* :" perhaps Pelagius was a Monk, but not in the ſenſe in which that term is now underſtood, namely, of a perſon confined to a monaſtery. In thoſe days there were erratic Monks, diſtinguiſhed chiefly by their habit *. Celeſtius was neither an Iriſhman nor a Monk, but an Italian, probably of Apulia, and an advocate †.

P. 478-9. " From Rome theſe two Monks went to " Africa." True; but they ſtayed *two* or *three* years in Sicily, after leaving Italy, before they reached Africa ‡.

P. 485. " But notwithſtanding this" [the condemnation of Celeſtius at the council of Carthage, 412] " the Pelagian doctrine was, for ſome time, received " with *great applauſe* at Rome, Zozimus, the biſhop " of Rome, being a favourer of it." *Zozimus, the biſhop of Rome, being a favourer of it :* I wiſh to know upon what authority this is aſſerted. That Zozimus *condemned* both Pelagius and Celeſtius, and *their doctrines*, is beyond diſpute §. That it was imputed to Zozimus that he favoured Pelagius and Celeſtius, that is,

* Comm. Adv. Hær. Pel. et Cel. Part 1ſt, p. 134, c. 1.
† Ib. p. 139. ‡ Ib.
§ Marius Mercator, Comm. 1ſt Part, p. 6.

their

their perſons, cannot be denied: but that he favoured *their doctrines*, as the Doctor ſays, is groundleſs: and that he improperly favoured the men, as countenancing their doctrines, is ſhewn by Garnerius to be ill founded*.

P. 487. "Pelagius and Celeſtius, being overborne "by the authority of Auguſtine, were in a manner "obliged to leave the continent of Europe, and *they* "*retired to Britain*, where their tenets had found a "favourer in Agricola, the ſon of Severian. To en- "counter them, Germanus biſhop of Auxerre, and "Lupus of Troies, were deputed by a ſynod in Gaul "to go over to Britain." Theſe two friends, inſtead of retiring to Britain, retired to Aſia, where it is probable Pelagius died *before* Germanus was deputed: for he was a very fat man, and, if alive, muſt have been at that time above *ninety*: an age to which few fat men arrive that have experienced much adverſe fortune. Beſides, we hear nothing of him after his condemnation at Antioch, about the year 418†. Celeſ-

* Marius Mercator, 1ſt Part, p. 13. Ib. p. 326. c. 2.

† Ib. p. 134.

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tius was at Conſtantinople, 429; it is not likely that he retired to Britain either, it not being his native country.

P. 478-9. 'Caſſian a native of Scythia:' it ſhould be a Monk of *Scyte*, in the deſert of Egypt, as has been ſhewn by Dr. Lardner, Article Caſſian. Dr. Lardner preſumes, and with great probability, that ignorant tranſcribers, having no knowledge of *Scyte*, miſtook it for the much-talked of country of *Scythia*. How improbable, beſides, that a barbarian ſhould be maſter of the Greek and Latin languages, at a time when ſuch knowledge was very rare even amongſt the Greeks and Latins themſelves.

P. 538. "It is equally true, that the council of "Epheſus was *little more* than the date of the origin "of Neſtorianiſm." The Doctor had before ſaid in the precedihg page, that "he [Diodorus, biſhop of "Tarſus] is alſo ſaid to have held that opinion, "which was afterwards called Neſtorianiſm, and to "have taught it to Theodorus, as the latter did to "Neſtorius himſelf." How inconſiſtent are theſe two paſſages! That Diodorus ſhould have taught the Neſ-

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torian opinion about ſeventy years before the council of Epheſus, and that this council ſhould be but a *little more* than the date of Neſtorianiſm.

Dr. Prieſtley, in his Letters to the Rev. Mr. Hawkins, p. 168, ſays, "According to ſome, this *diſtinc-* "*tion* in the Divine nature ſo little affects the *unity* of "it, that it is held to be only a temporary thing. For, "as I am informed, Dr. Hinchliffe, the biſhop of "Peterborough, in a charge which he lately deli- "vered at Daventry, thinking proper to give his "clergy his own ideas of a doctrine which is now "the ſubject of public diſcuſſion, ſaid that, in his "opinion, 'When the time ſhall come in which *the* 'Son *ſhall give up the kingdom to the Father*, ſo that 'God *ſhall be all in all*, the threefold diſtinction which 'at preſent ſubſiſts in the Divine nature ſhall be no 'more.'

"This, I ſhall obſerve, was very nearly the opi- "nion of the ancient Sabellians." The Doctor will, I hope, excuſe me for ſaying, that it was the *very opinion* maintained by Marcellus*; ſo that, if Dr. Prieſtley has been rightly informed, we have a Marcellian

* Euſ. cont. Marcellum, p. 6. l. 8.

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in the ſee of Peterborough. As I have proved Biſhop Horſley, who they ſay expects a mitre, to be a Sabellian: and from ſome extracts which I have ſeen from tracts of the biſhops of London, Worceſter, and Cheſter, I apprehend that they alſo have erred ſometimes *by exceſs*, ſometimes *by defect*; it will follow then that our Hierarchy is a compound of various hereticaſ ſects.

Since I have written the above, I perceived, in the Gentleman's Magazine for 1790, a ſort of defence of the biſhop, which, I apprehend, may be ſuppoſed to have undergone his Lordſhip's inſpection, and therefore to be an accurate ſtatement of his Lordſhip's ſentiments. It is as follows:

"We maintain a Trinity of perſons or characters, "under the name of the Father we acknowledge God "as the ſupreme author of nature; under the cha- "racter of the Son we acknowledge *the ſame God* as "the redeemer and regenerator of man; under the "character of the Holy Ghoſt we acknowledge *Him* "as the divine influence; for the Father and the "Son are *one*; the fulneſs of the *Godhead* dwelt bodily "in Chriſt." This I affirm to be the opinion aſcribed

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by the ancients to Sabellius; it being equivalent to *one thing* with *three* names.

But be this as it may, it is evident that the biſhop of St. David's and the biſhop of Peterborough actually entertain *different* notions of the perſons in the Trinity: the former thinking *Them* to be "more ſtrictly "*One* than *any individual thing* in the whole world of "Matter and Spirit:" See 1ſt Part, p. 140. Whereas the biſhop of Peterborough holds them to be at preſent *Three*. I think it incumbent on their lordſhips to inform the public which of theſe opinions is orthodox.

I ſhall put an end to theſe remarks on Dr. Prieſtley, by noticing a few leſs important errors, or inaccuracies, which may be corrected in future editions.

Vol. II. p. 133. "Sabellians *and* Patripaſſians:" read, *or* Patripaſſians. They were two appellations of the ſame ſect.

Ib. 135. "Six months:" read, *a year* and ſix months.

Ib. 412. "Bonoſus a biſhop *in* Macedonia:" read, *of Sardica*, the metropolis of Dacia. Marius Mercator.

Vol. II. p. 454. Theodoſius "left a ſon of the name "of Theodoſius, *juſt weaned*:" read, *ſeven years old.*

Ib. 517. "Theodoſius, who died by a fall from his "horſe in hunting, A. D. 450, after a reign of *thirty-* "*eight* years:" read, *forty-two* years.

Ib. 519. "At this council [Chalcedon], which con- "ſiſted of 360 biſhops:" read, of 630 biſhops.

Ib. p. 509. "John biſhop of Antioch not appear- "ing *after three days*:" read, *the day after being a third time ſummoned.* Marius Mercator, Pref. to Second Part, p. 30.

I ſhall now proceed to ſome further remarks upon Mr. Gibbon.

Vol. IV. p. 545. Note. "I appeal to the confeſ- "ſion of two Oriental prelates, Gregory Abulphara- "gius the Jacobite primate of the Eaſt, and Elias the "Neſtorian, metropolitan of Damaſcus. (See Aſſe- "man Bibliothec. Univerſal. tom. ii. p. 291. tom. iii. "p. 514, &c.) that the Melchites, Jacobites, Neſto- "rians, &c. agree in the *doctrine*, and differ only in "the *expreſſion*. Our moſt learned and rational di- "vines, Baſnage, Le Clerc, Beauſobre, La Croſe, Mo-

"ſheim,

"ſheim, Jablonſki, are inclined to favour this cha-
"ritable judgment; but the zeal of Petavius is loud
"and angry, and the moderation of Dupin is con-
"veyed in a whiſper." It is evident, that all theſe learned men, including Mr. Gibbon himſelf, and Petavius alſo, were ignorant of the *union according to the Subſiſtence*, which diſtinguiſhed the Catholics or Melchites, from the Eutychians or Jacobites on the one hand, and the Neſtorians on the other: this may not be ſo much wondered at: but that ſo many learned men ſhould not have been able to diſtinguiſh the Neſtorians, who held *three* Subſiſtences in Chriſt, namely, the Body, the Soul, and the God-Word, from the Eutychians, who held only *one* Subſiſtence, or a ſingle nature, is truly ſurprizing.

P. 563. "The Monophyſite doctrine was rigorouſly
"preached in the churches of Egypt, the primitive
"creed of Apolinaris was protected by the ſanctity
"of Cyril;—Dioſcorus, who had ſucceeded to the
"throne, the *creed*, &c. of the nephew [Cyril] of
"Theophilus." This paſſage ſhews, that Mr. Gibbon did not know the diſtinction between the Catholics and Apolinaris: and confirms the preceding ob-

ſervation, that he did not know the diſtinction between the Catholics and Monophyſites. Dioſcorus was a Monophyſite.

P. 587. "*Monothelites*, or aſſerters of *one Will*:" theſe were evidently heretics; for if Chriſt had but *one Will*, he could have had but *one* intellectual principle.

P. 611. Mr. Gibbon makes Apolinaris the ſucceſſor of Paul, biſhop of Alexandria. He was not, however, *Paul's ſucceſſor*; Zoilus being elected upon the depoſition of Paul, who poſſeſſed the ſee of Alexandria ten or eleven years *.

P. 593. "Both in his native and epiſcopal province "the Hereſy of the unfortunate Neſtorius was ſpeed-"ily obliterated." Mr. Gibbon afterwards obſerves how it ſtruck deep root in Perſia: neither of which is at all ſurprizing. His doctrine was ever unpopular at Conſtantinople; ſo that its being condemned at the council of Epheſus was alone ſufficient to annihilate it in the royal city. In Syria, however, it maintained its ground for *three* or *four* years after its condemnation at Epheſus. Until the Emperor had plainly ſhewn his avowed enmity to that Hereſy, by

* Auctarium Theodrt. p. 493.

ordering

ordering the writings of Neſtorius to the flames, and himſelf to the Oaſis. Though ſome of the Oriental clergy might mutter, yet none of them durſt avow the opinion of Neſtorius. But the perſevering Theodoret, retiring to his dioceſe of Cyrus, thence fearleſſly inculcated the tenets of Neſtorius. While his friend Ibas, afterwards biſhop of Edeſſa, was engaged in rendering into the vular Syriac thoſe parts of the writings of Diodorus of Tarſus, and of Theodore of Mopſueſtia, which inculcated the ſame doctrines. Hence the riſe of the celebrated ſchool of Edeſſa, where the Neſtorian tenets were publickly taught. When to this is added, that Theodoret was almoſt adored in the province of Euphratenſis, in which his dioceſe lay; that his metropolitan, the biſhop of Anazarbus, and the other biſhops of the province had adopted or embraced the ſame opinion; that by writing the lives of the moſt celebrated Monks who reſided in this province, in which, by magnifying their auſtere virtues in a moſt extravagant manner, he had attached this claſs of human beings, who have ſuch influence upon the ignorant multitude, ſo entirely to him; and alſo by a mode of living ſcarcely inferior to

the moſt rigid among themſelves, it is not ſurprizing, that by means of the faith of ſuch apparently holy men, which he entirely guided, that Neſtorianiſm ſhould ſtrike deep root in this province; and, from its bordering upon Perſia, that it ſhould quickly penetrate into that country alſo. This brings me to the celebrated conteſt between Juſtinian and Vigilius, biſhop of Rome.

I have juſt obſerved when Neſtorius was baniſhed to the Oaſis, and his writings to the flames, that his partizans, Theodoret and Ibas, were chiefly engaged, the firſt in maintaining the ſoundneſs of the opinions of the faith of Neſtorius, and abuſing Cyril, as renewing the Hereſy of Apolinaris; the latter in rendering the works of Diodorus and Theodore into Syriac: the conſequence of both which was, that tumults began to ſpread in Armenia, a province in which the Apolinarian Hereſy, which was the moſt adverſe to the Neſtorian, had ſtruck deep root in, between the partizans of Apolinaris and Neſtorius. To put a ſtop to the evil, which was likely to encreaſe from the popularity of the writings of Theodore biſhop of Mopſueſtia, and Diodorus biſhop of Tarſus, Proclus,

biſhop

biſhop of Conſtantinople, compoſed a work which he called his *Tome*, and had it tranſmitted to Armenia. This production muſt have been orthodox, having received the approbation of Cyril, as well as of John of Antioch: yet it was ſo far from meeting Theodoret's approbation, that he wrote a violent work againſt it. The principals, however, Cyril and Proclus, having ſhortly after paid the debt of nature, prevented matters from coming to extremities for the preſent.

After the Eutychians had been condemned at Chalcedon, who always bore an inveterate enmity to the Neſtorians, but more eſpecially to Theodoret, they began to cull exceptionable paſſages out of his writings, as well as out of thoſe of Theodore of Mopſueſtia, and Ibas of Edeſſa; which they maintained, as teaching the *ſame* doctrines as Neſtorius, equally merited to be *anathematized*. But to ſuch imputations it may be eaſily conceived that the Catholics would pay little attention, as the writings, from which ſome of thoſe paſſages were taken, had been recited in the council of Chalcedon; and to condemn paſſages extracted from them, would be to affix a

ſtigma

ſtigma upon that council, whoſe deciſions were chiefly regarded and extolled by themſelves.

While theſe were ſupported by Catholic princes things went on ſmoothly. But the ſucceſſors of Marcian being, for the moſt part, avowed or diſguiſed Eutychians, for about fifty years, the Catholics, during this ſpace, did not find it ſo eaſy to maintain their ground, while attacked by artful competitors, ſupported by government. Hence we find, that in two provincial ſynods, both held during the reign of Anaſtaſius, in the beginning of the ſixth century, one at Conſtantinople, the other at Sidon, that the aſſembled biſhops pronounced an anathema, not only againſt Diodorus, Theodore, Ibas, &c. but alſo againſt thoſe others who ſtill remained members of the Catholic church, though they taught the ſame doctrines as Neſtorius: and not only againſt thoſe, but even againſt pope Leo the Great, and his *Tome* or rule of faith, and the council of Chalcedon: however, as being only provincial ſynods, independently of their being utterly diſcountenanced by the biſhops of Rome, what had been determined in them would have been deemed of little account, had not Juſti-

nian,

nian, in consequence of being over-reached by an artful bishop, a disguised Eutychian, who was abetted in his designs by the queen, the celebrated Theodora, taking a decided part, in order to have Theodore bishop of Mopsuestia, Theodoret bishop of Cyrus, and Ibas of Edessa, condemned, and anathematized, both themselves and their writings. The occasion of it was as follows:

Paul of Tabenne, an Eutychian, who had been appointed bishop of Alexandria, was shortly after deposed for the murder of a deacon, in a synod convened for that purpose at Gaza 540, in which the pope's legate, Pelagius, presided. Zoilus was appointed to fill the vacant see. Pelagius, in returning to Constantinople by the way of Palestine, was addressed by the monks of this country, who informed him of disturbances which other monks, who professed the opinions of Origen, whence they were called Origenists, had given rise to in the monasteries. Besides other damnable doctrines, they taught the preexistence of human souls, and that the wicked would not be eternally damned. These notions, for three centuries after Origen, were deemed only the harm-

leſs reveries of an elegant mind: but at this time ſo many damning conſequences were diſcovered by the quick-ſighted Catholics to be deducible from them, that no mercy could be expected here on earth to any who held, much leſs propagated, ſuch tenets. This ſuperior clear-ſightedneſs of the later Fathers aroſe from the controverſies which the Pelagian, Celeſtian, Neſtorian, and Eutychian Hereſies had given riſe to: for ſcarcely any opinion could be advanced, which, by conſequences drawn from it, might not entangle the propounder in one or other of theſe Hereſies. Having already explained the nature of the two laſt, I ſhall here only obſerve, that Pelagius taught *the freedom of the Human Will*; and Celeſtius, that *the Sin of Adam did not attach to his poſterity* *.

Pelagius received the intelligence with much ſatiſfaction, well knowing, from the Emperor's orthodoxy, that he ſhould be able to obtain whatever he deſired to ſilence, or puniſh, theſe refractory Monks: but the pleaſure was much enhanced by the reflection, that while performing his duty, he was at the ſame time giving a blow to the Eutychians, the moſt formidable enemies of the Catholics, and in particular

* Vincentius Lirinenſis, p. 355. Edit. Bal.

to

to Theodorus, the diſguiſed Eutychian biſhop of Ceſarea in Cappadocia, who rivalled him in the Emperor's affection. Juſtinian, upon the information, immediately ſet about compoſing an edict, which ſhortly after was promulgated, in which he expounded, confuted, and proſcribed the opinions of Origen: he, moreover, formed a rule of faith, and threatened all gainſayers with an anathema. After which he ſent it to the biſhop of Rome, and to all the patriarchs, to be ſubſcribed by them and their ſuffragan biſhops; commanding, beſides, that no perſon ſhould, in future, be elected biſhop or abbot who did not ſubſcribe his edict. It is obſerved, that he was the *firſt* layman who preſcribed articles of faith. Perhaps St. Paul had him in view, 2 Theſſ. ii. 4!!!

Notwithſtanding that Origen had formerly the honour of being defended by the great Athanaſius, there was no one now hardy enough to incur the Imperial reſentment by ſupporting his cauſe: and there being nothing objectionable in the edict, except the *unhallowed* ſource from which it flowed, it was ſubſcribed, with perhaps a few murmurs, by a ſubmiſſive clergy.

The Emperor rejoiced at his eaſy victory over the Origeniſts; and being at leaſt equally ambitious of ſhining in the character of a theologian, as in that of a legiſlator and conqueror, conceived the feaſibility of making all ſects to lay aſide their differences, and unite into one fraternal bond of unity. With this view he determined to try his next eſſay with the *acephali* or Eutychians. The wily Theodorus, biſhop of Ceſarea, having come to the knowledge of the Emperor's deſign of compelling the Eutychians to ſubſcribe to the decrees of the council of Chalcedon, which, in oppoſition to them, had eſtabliſhed the doctrine of *two* Natures, or Subſiſtencies, in Chriſt, conceived a counter plan, which he communicated to the Empreſs, who was alſo a Eutychian, by which he truſted not only to return the compliment *in kind* to Pelagius, but alſo, by affixing a ſtigma on the council of Chalcedon, which was ſo much celebrated by the Catholics, to give a ſevere blow to them alſo. Having from experience a juſt idea of the ſagacity and abilities of Pelagius, the pope's legate, and knowing alſo what influence he had with Juſtinian, who, being rigidly orthodox, would, with ſuch an adviſer, be ever

guarded

guarded againſt falling into any ſnare ultimately intended to affix a blot on the Catholic faith; it was therefore agreed upon between the Empreſs and Theodorus, to remove Pelagius from Conſtantinople before they took any ſtep, leſt the Emperor, being warned by him of the conſequences, ſhould prove obſtinate againſt their future machinations. Accordingly they contrived to have him ſent upon ſome honourable pretext to Rome. Theodorus then, addreſſing the Emperor, obſerved to him, that the ſtep he was going to take againſt the Acephali would be attended with commotions and tumults; for that they were not like the *Origeniſts*, Monks cooped up in monaſteries; but, on the contrary, were powerful in the cities, and would reſiſt. But wherefore, ſaid he, proceed in this manner againſt them? The Acephali have no abhorrence to the council of Chalcedon: their objections regard only thoſe hypocritical wretches Theodoret and Ibas, who, though in heart Neſtorians, had, nevertheleſs, the baſeneſs to pronounce an anathema againſt that doctrine, and, through this deceitful means, were raſhly received into communion by the Fathers there aſſembled—that

the

the Acephali would be contented, were the heretical writings of theſe men condemned, and their perſons anathematized—that their name [without a head] ſhewed, that they were of no faction, nor attached to any head.—Moreover, continued he, were even the characters of theſe three men without blemiſh, ſtill to attain unanimity among Catholics, the complying with the wiſhes of the Acephali ſhould not be deemed too great a ſacrifice; but ſo far from this being the caſe, their characters and principles are of a very dubious complexion; for Theodore of Mopſueſtia, independently of his having recanted, by his great fame ſtill protects many damnable opinions which he entertained. Theodoret of Cyrus, beſides the turbulency of his character, never ceaſed writing againſt the council of Epheſus, and calumniating Cyril, not to mention his having, in the moſt prevaricating manner, pronounced an anathema againſt the opinion of Neſtorius at the council of Chalcedon, of which, till then, he was the firm defender, and therefore his ſincerity in that ſolemn ceremony may, with good reaſon, be deemed problematical.—That Ibas had been queſtioned for crimes, of which to be ſuſpected was a diſhonour:

diſhonour: that through his means the ſchool of Edeſſa had been eſtabliſhed, from whence the Neſtorian tenets were propagated on all ſides: that, like Theodoret, he ceaſed not praiſing Neſtorius and calumniating Cyril. Therefore, ſo far from any ſtigma being affixed on the council of Chalcedon, by condemning theſe individuals, it would be, on the contrary, purified from a blot to which all human affairs were ſubject. This reaſoning ſatisfied Juſtinian. Accordingly, abandoning his firſt deſign, he adopted the idea of Theodorus, who had a paper ready drawn up for the purpoſe; which, being preſented to Juſtinian, he publiſhed as his own, in the ſtyle of an Imperial edict. In this the *three chapters* are condemned, and an anathema pronounced againſt the perſons of Theodore of Mopſueſtia, Theodoret of Cyrus, and Ibas of Edeſſa: he then ſent it to all the biſhops to be ſubſcribed. Mennas of Conſtantinople ſubſcribed conditionally, *if approved by the ſee of Rome*; the other patriarchs ſubſcribed it unconditionally, probably fearing the conſequences of Juſtinian's violent temper. The biſhop of Rome, however, refuſed his aſſent, obſerving, *that what was complete and perfect did not admit of amend-*

ment

ment or addition. His conduct was followed by the whole Weſtern church.

To dwell upon the particulars of a ſeven years conteſt between Juſtinian and pope Vigilius, would be foreign to my deſign. I ſhall only obſerve, that the Emperor, to accompliſh his purpoſe, ſcrupled not to diſpenſe with his ſolemn engagements; and that Vigilius, after having condemned the three chapters, and retracted his condemnation, yielded at length to the calling of a general council at Conſtantinople, in which *the three chapters*, containing the obnoxious extracts from the writings of Theodore, Theodoret, and Ibas, were condemned; and alſo the perſon of Theodore, with a ſalvo for the perſons of Theodoret and Ibas.

The jet of the controvery between Juſtinian and Vigilius turned upon the *perſons* *: for during the triumph of Eutychianiſm, when the Emperors had eſpouſed that opinion, the Eutychians had introduced a new and certain mode of over-reaching plain and ſimple people among the Catholics, which was this:

* One would imagine, from Note 96, that Mr. Gibbon was not aware of this.

they

they would firſt aſk them, Whether they condemned Neſtorius? To this no Catholic could or would refuſe his aſſent. They would then aſk, Did not the Catholics condemn all thoſe who taught the ſame tenets as Neſtorius? To this they muſt alſo neceſſarily aſſent: which was tacitly condemning Theodore, Theodoret, and Ibas. They would then aſk, Did not the Catholics condemn all thoſe who received ſuch perſons? This the Catholics muſt alſo neceſſarily grant: and thus they were regularly and unavoidably brought to condemn the council of Chalcedon, which had received the *Perſons* of Theodoret and Ibas, which council was eſteemed the ſheet-anchor of the Catholics themſelves. It was with this view that the condemnation of the *three chapters*, and their *authors*, was projected by the artful Theodorus. However, to obviate the neceſſary conſequences which muſt have reſulted from aſſenting to the firſt requiſition of the Eutychians, it had been a maxim, till then maintained among the Catholics, except in the ſingle inſtance of Origen, that thoſe perſons who died *in the peace of the church*, whoſe names of courſe, if biſhops, were inſcribed in the ſacred rolls, called Dyptics,

could never after be ſubject to eccleſiaſtical cenſures, either for their faith or writings. Vigilius's oppoſition to the edict was, therefore, founded upon this mode of queſtioning introduced by the Eutychians, becauſe he clearly ſaw through the deſign of Theodorus, who intended giving a mortal wound to the council of Chalcedon, through the ſides of Theodoret and Ibas. However, in this he was in the main diſappointed; for, though this council had received, and had afterwards, upon the Egyptian biſhops accuſing Theodoret of Neſtorianiſm, adjudged him innocent, upon his pronouncing, though with much difficulty, an anathema againſt Neſtorius and his tenets; yet it had determined nothing with regard to his writings. The ſame may be ſaid of Ibas. It muſt be acknowledged, however, that as a part of Ibas's writings had been read in that council, and doubtleſs without their being at all impeached, and therefore may be ſaid to have been tacitly approved in it, the council of Conſtantinople, in condemning the writings of Ibas, conveyed a tacit cenſure upon that of Chalcedon.

The biſhop of Rome, however, alledging that, as Theodore died in *the peace of the church*, it was not in

his

his power to gratify the Emperor by condemning his perſon. The Emperor on the contrary affirmed, that he did *not* die in the peace of the church. This being a queſtion of fact, was quickly determined, by convening a ſynod at Mopſueſtia, which, upon inſpecting the Dyptics kept in the cathedral of that city, the Catholics, to their great amazement found that the name of Theodore was not mentioned in them; but, that in the place where it ſhould have been in, they found the name of Cyril inſcribed, who had no connection whatever with the church of Mopſueſtia, and whoſe name of courſe ought not to have been inſerted in the ſacred roll of that church. The oldeſt people of the place having been examined about it, were unanimous in acknowledging, that among the names in the Dyptics, which were annually read over in the preſence of the people, they never recollected to have heard the name of Theodore; neither did there appear any eraſure in the roll. Garnerius therefore ſuppoſes, and with great probability, that during the uſurpation of Baſiliſcus, between ſixty and ſeventy years before, when things were carried on with great violence by the Eutychians, who were countenanced

by the uſurper, that the ancient Dyptics had been removed from the cathedral, and another roll, with Cyril's name in the place of Theodore's, depoſited there. No eraſure appearing in the Dyptics ſhews that they were not the old Dyptics, in which his name was certainly inſcribed in the time of Theodoret, now dead above ninety years. Theodore's name not being found in this ſacred roll, there was no farther objection made by the pope to his condemnation. So that the Emperor, who wanted the *perſons* of the *three* to be anathematized, was partly gratified, and partly diſappointed; which laſt chagrined him.

Whether the biſhop of Rome ſubſcribed, or acknowledged in writing, the decrees of this council, though there are many to whom it appears a very ſimple queſtion, I cannot avoid agreeing with Garnerius in eſteeming it to be one of the moſt difficult to come to a determination upon that ever occurred to me in the courſe of my reading. Be this however as it may, the biſhops of Rome were taught one leſſon by this council; namely, that a man might ſeemingly die a ſaint, and afterwards be ſent to the devil, ſhould it in future appear that he had propounded,

propounded, or advanced, heretical tenets in his writings; or if he praiſed ſuch as did. It might be apprehended, that the great Athanaſius himſelf might come within this predicament, for he both admired and praiſed Diodorus of Tarſus, who taught Neſtorianiſm, and was beſides an admirer and defender of Origen. But the Catholics had provided for themſelves a retreat in this reſpect; namely, the *view* with which ſuch opinions were taught: if *in oppoſition* to the Catholic church, they were then heretical, and their authors heretics, and of courſe damned; but if they were advanced only with the view of facilitating the knowledge of the Chriſtian faith, they were either uncenſured by the church, or were allowed to explain. In a word, the eccleſiaſtical polity eſtabliſhed by the ancient Catholics was armed at all points. I am inclined to think that it is not well known by the moderns. When the effects which it produced are conſidered, it muſt be admitted, by all who allow effects to have proportionate cauſes, to have been deviſed with conſummate wiſdom and ſagacity.

If what I have here laid down concerning this celebrated controverſy between Juſtinian and Vigilius

be

be compared with the accounts of the moderns, the differences will be found not to be inconſiderable. It is extracted from the Auctarium of Theodoret, where each particular will be found eſtabliſhed upon the beſt evidence which now exiſts. This work does not ſeem to be known to Mr. Gibbon.

I will now conclude theſe ſtrictures with pointing out a few trivial errors in this celebrated hiſtorian, which chiefly regard the Neſtorians; and which I might expect to ſee corrected in a future edition of his maſterly work, had not the errors, &c. pointed out by the *learned* and *ingenious* Dr. Chelſum, been permitted to remain, notwithſtanding that, according to the Doctor himſelf, they are indefenſible.

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P. 557. Mr. Gibbon ſays, "The Oriental ſynod "of *fifty* biſhops degraded Cyril:" read, *forty-three*: ſeven of the Oriental biſhops had joined the Catholics. Marius Mercator, Pref. part 2, p. 27.

P. 558. "He [Theodoſius] ſummoned from either "party *eight* choſen deputies:" read, *ſeven*. Ib. p. 36.

P. 560. "Eutyches, the hereſiarch Eutyches, is "honourably named by Cyril as a friend, a *ſaint*, and

"a *ſtre-*

"a *ſtrenuous defender of the faith.*" And why might he not be all theſe in the opinion of the Catholic Cyril *at this time?* It was not for ſixteen or ſeventeen years *after*, when Cyril was dead, that he broached his heretical opinions.

P. 560. "His [Eutyches] brother, the abbot Dal-"matius." They might be called brothers in a religious ſenſe; but there being thirty-five years difference in their ages, makes it improbable that they were brothers by nature: perhaps the firſt ſenſe is that intended.

P. 584. "The *authors*, as well as the defenders, of "the three chapters were ſeparated from the commu-"nion of the ſaints, and ſolemnly delivered to the "prince of darkneſs." True with regard to the *defenders*; but the unfortunate Theodore was the only *one* of the *authors* delivered up to his Satanic majeſty.

P. 594. "In the *Perſian* ſchool of Edeſſa:" read, *Chriſtian* ſchool. Διδασκαλειου χριστιανικου is Theodore the reader's phraſe, to whom Mr. Gibbon refers. Edeſſa was not in Perſia. See Mr. Gibbon's Map.

Ib. "The *rigid* unity of the Monophyſites, who, "under the reigns of Zeno and Anaſtaſius, had in-

"vaded

"vaded the thrones of the East, provoked their an-
"tagoniſts [the Neſtorians], in a land of freedom, to
"avow a moral, rather than a phyſical, union of the
"two perſons of Chriſt." The Neſtorians *always* held a moral union *only*, and never a phyſical one. *Perſons* here ſhould be Subſiſtencies. What a *rigid* union intends I cannot ſee. Mr. Gibbon cannot, ſurely, ſuppoſe there are degrees of unity.

P. 602. "Severus condemned, in the ſtyle of the
"*Henoticon*, the adverſe hereſies of Neſtorius and Eu-
"tyches; maintained againſt the latter, the *reality* of
"the body of Chriſt." This is the firſt time that I have underſtood that Eutyches denied Jeſus Chriſt having a *real* body. He denied that his body was conſubſtantial with ours; as not being derived from woman, but having been brought down from heaven.

P. 616. "A metaphyſical religion may appear too
"refined for the capacity of the Negro race: yet a
"Black, or a parrot, might be taught to repeat the
"words of the Chalcedonian, or Monophyſite creed."
This paſſage ſhews, that Mr. Gibbon thinks that the whole was *a diſpute of words*, and alſo of his not underſtanding the points in diſcuſſion between theſe

ſects:

ſects: which it was impoſſible he ſhould, as, like the other learned moderns, he did not know the force of the terms introduced by the different ſects, either for explaining their own tenets, or expoſing the abſurdity of thoſe of their adverſaries.

Vol. I.

P. 539. Mr. Gibbon ſays, "The Jewiſh religion "was admirably fitted for defence, but it was never "deſigned for conqueſt; and it ſeems probable, that "the number of proſelytes was never much ſuperior "to that of Apoſtates." As I have never met with in my reading of any *Jewiſh apoſtates*, ſave that one mentioned by Dr. Prieſtley from Epiphanius, who became a *Chriſtian*, that is, a *worſhipper of Chriſt*, or *a believer that he was the Meſſiah*, for ſuch only I call Chriſtians, the proportion between them can only be determined by knowing the number of proſelytes, of whom we cannot even form a gueſs. By apoſtates I mean Jews who aſſociated in their worſhip *another* god or gods with Jehovah the God of Iſrael, and who neglected the ceremonial law of Moſes. Beſides, how could the Jewiſh religion be intended for conqueſt, if many of its inſtitutions were expreſsly appointed to diſtinguiſh Jews from other people FOR EVER.

P. 540. "Whenever the God of Iſrael acquired any "new votaries, he was much more indebted to the in- "ocnſtant humour of Polytheiſm, than to the active "zeal of his miſſionaries." This obſervation does not accord with hiſtorical teſtimony. Joſ. cont. Apion, l. ii, c. 36. Matth. xxiii. 15.

P. 542. "The *Jewiſh* converts, who acknowledged "Jeſus in the *character of the Meſſiah* foretold by their "ancient oracles, reſpected him as a prophetic teacher "of religion and virtue." I truſt, that I have ſhewn, that no Jewiſh convert ever acknowledged Jeſus in that character. This is, beſides, inconſiſtent with Mr. Gibbon's notion of there having been Jewiſh Gnoſtics: for the Gnoſtics univerſally affirmed, that Chriſt was *at the leaſt* one of the ſuperior intelligencies; and this was ſomething more than a prophetic teacher, or the Meſſiah.

P. 674, note 29. "This hereſy [of Paul of Sa- "moſate], like thoſe of Noetus and Sabellius in the "ſame century, tended to *confound* the myſterious "diſtinction of the Divine Perſons." It was, however, the very oppoſite of theirs; for Paul erred *by defect*: whereas they erred *by exceſs*. Moreover, Noetus and Sabellius,

Sabellius, as denying a *plurality* of the Divine Perſons, cannot, *with propriety*, be ſaid to *confound them*.

Vol. II.

P. 241. "While the blood of Chriſt yet ſmoaked "on Mount Calvary, the Docetes invented the im- "pious and extravagant hypotheſis, that inſtead of iſ- "ſuing from the womb of the Virgin, he had deſcended "on the banks of the Jordan, in the form of perfect "manhood; that he had impoſed on the ſenſes of his "enemies, and of his diſciples; and that the miniſters "of Pilate had waſted their impotent rage on an airy "phantom, who ſeemed to expire on the croſs, and "after three days to riſe from the dead." The ſame ſentiment is repeated, Vol. iv. p. 537, where Jerome's words are quoted. However, Jerome's authority is of no weight againſt the expreſs teſtimony of the Docetes themſelves, who fix their origin one hundred and fifteen years after the Crucifixion *. Moreover, Epiphanius, Hær. 31. S. 1. obſerves, that all the Gnoſtic hereſies ſprung up *at one time*; which, according to him, muſt have been in the reign of Adrian, from his men-

* Turtullian ad. Mar. l. i. c. 19. Vid. Preliminary Diſquiſition, p. 39. n. 18. 18.

tioning Valentinus, Baſilides, Ptolemæus, &c. who are placed by all writers in the reign of Adrian.

I have juſt looked over Dr. Chelſum's remarks and reply to Mr. Gibbon's vindication, in order to ſee upon what grounds this celebrated writer has been attacked by Chriſtian Theologians: the reſult has been, that I muſt agree with Mr. Gibbons, that, though all they have objected againſt him were admitted, ſo far from impugning his objections to Chriſtianity, they might be only deemed a 'decent liſt 'of errata.' For Mr. Gibbon's objections appear to me to be—that the doctrines, taught in the New Teſtament, are not agreeable to the nature of man;—and even though they were diſcovered to be agreeable to our nature, yet that they are inconſiſtent with, and contradictory to thoſe delivered by Moſes, which would argue a *mutation* in the divine will—and that, in either of theſe caſes, no teſtimony can eſtabliſh the divine authority of ſuch writings:—and thirdly and chiefly, that though the doctrines in both Teſtaments were admitted to be agreeable to our nature, and conſiſtent with each other, ſtill that the teſtimony, adducible to eſtabliſh their authenticity, is of

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ſo ſuſpicious a nature, that writings, containing ſuch wonderful relations, ought not to be received upon ſuch evidence. If I am well founded in theſe conjectures, I apprehend, that all unprejudiced perſons, of common underſtanding, and who ſincerely ſeek the truth, will agree with me, that though all that the Chriſtian writers have aſſerted againſt this ingenious author were acknowledged to be well founded, nevertheleſs that Chriſtianity has received a mortal wound from him. For, whether Mr. Gibbon has fairly repreſented Cyprian's conduct, or not—or whether he makes Origen and Euſebius ſay *more* than they did—or whether Euſebius of Cæſarea *conducted* the proſecution againſt Athanaſius, or whether he did not—are queſtions of trifling concern, in compariſon of what appears to me to be Mr. Gibbon's grand objections to Chriſtianity. From Chriſtian writers not meeting their ingenious opponent upon this material part of the queſtion, but pointing out, and harping upon trifling miſtakes, it would ſeem that they avoided the main objection, and upon which the whole depends, as unanſwerable.

When

When I reflect upon the clearneſs of underſtanding, and the ſagacity of Chriſtians in other ſpeculations, it appears to me abſolutely unaccountable, how the miraculous accounts in the New Teſtament ſhould be at all received by them. Is it reaſonable to give credit to the relation of a miracle having been performed, when the ſpectators themſelves *ſeem* not to have been impreſſed with the idea of a divine agency? To ſay that their hearts were hardened by the Deity, as is frequently intimated, is to believe that the Deity performed *two* miracles, one in oppoſition to the other: by which the effect of both muſt have been for ever loſt to poſterity, for whom it is acknowledged they were chiefly deſigned. Can ſuch abſurd conduct be aſcribed without blaſphemy to the Deity? Even in the human ſpecies ſuch conduct would be deemed extravagant. But wherefore reaſon with Chriſtian Divines? It is true, that Mr. Gibbon predicates *rationality* of ſome of them. I think after this, he ſhould not be deemed a ſceptic. Let then ſome one of theſe *rational* divines prove, upon *un*ſuſpicious evidence, that the Goſpel of Matthew, or any other book of the New Teſtament, even *exiſted* in

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the firſt century of Chriſtianity. I have ſeen all Lardner's collections of *hearſays* concerning this queſtion, the very peruſal of which made me at once an unbeliever of its being an authentic relation: for to credit miraculous relations upon *hearſay* evidence, even though the writings themſelves contained no *internal* marks of ſpuriouſneſs, with which however they *abound*, appears to me, and on any indifferent queſtion would ſo to all the world, a proof of extreme bigotry, or weakneſs of underſtanding.

From the peruſal of Dr. Chelſum's reply to Mr. Gibbon, I find that he, as well as another learned anonymous Chriſtian, is of opinion, that Euſebius of Cæſarea did *not preſide* in the ſynod in which Athanaſius was condemned; and that Potamo, the Martyr, was not well founded in imputing criminal compliances to this celebrated biſhop. But that Euſebius of Cæſarea *did* preſide in this council, and that Potamo was *well founded* in his charge againſt him, muſt be admitted from what Epiphanius ſays concerning this tranſaction: for he firſt obſerves, that Euſebius of Cæſarea, with *ſome others*, was appointed to judge Athanaſius. He then obſerves, that Potamo, the Martyr, whom he

calls

calls a plain ſpoken man, ſeeing Euſebius *ſitting*, and Athanaſius *ſtanding*, weeping exclaims, "Are you "*ſeated* Euſebius, and is Athanaſius *ſtanding*, to be "judged *by you?* Who can ſuffer ſuch things? Tell "me, *you*, were you not in priſon with me in time of "perſecution. I truly loſt an eye for the truth: but "you are here ſafe and ſound. By what means did "you eſcape from priſon, unleſs by *confeſſing* that "you did ſomething *unlawful*, or by *actually doing* "ſo?" Euſebius, ſtung at hearing theſe words, roſe up, and *diſſolved the council*, ſaying, "If you come "here, and object ſuch thing againſt us, truly what "your accuſers ſay muſt be true: for if you act ſo "violently here, how much more in your own "country?" Not a word is mentioned in the whole ſection of Euſebius of Nicomedia; as for *inferences* drawn from letters, they ſhould be utterly diſregarded againſt ſuch expreſs teſtimony. That Euſebius was guilty is clear, from the ſhameful obſervation with which he diſſolves the meeting, independently of the unparalled impudence which Potamo muſt have poſſeſſed, to impute ſuch a charge againſt the preſident of an aſſembly; many of whom muſt, equally as himſelf,

ſelf, have known whether it was well founded or not. Surely Epiphanius ſhould have cautioned the reader, were Potamo unfounded in his accuſation. Having ſhewn this courtly biſhop to have been an Arian, perhaps the Orthodox will no longer contend for the immaculateneſs of his character.

Chriſtian writers plume themſelves upou the diſcovery of Biſhop Watſon, that Pliny's epiſtle *devoted* to *eclipſes* of an *extraordinary* nature and unuſual duration, conſiſts only of *three or four lines*, and therefore that it is not ſurpriſing, the wonderful eclipſe or darkneſs, which took place at the Paſſion, has not been noticed by him. Now I will appeal to every unprejudiced perſon, whether it would not be very ſtrange indeed, had ſuch an effect taken place, which we are told affected the *inhabited* world, that neither Seneca, nor Pliny, nor any other of the ancient Heathen writers which have come down to us, have at all noticed it. 2dly, Admitting that the darkneſs and earthquake affected only the land of Judea, as the moderns *more conveniently* interpret the Greek terms, which literally ſignify the *inhabited world*, that it ſhould not appear very extraordinary, that none of the ancients have recorded the phenomenon, which

happening at *noon day*, muſt have appeared to them preternatural. 3dly, Admitting that the darkneſs only affected the region about Jeruſalem, as ſome of the moderns, *ſtill more conveniently*, expound the paſſage; would it not be very ſurprizing, that ſuch a phenomenon ſhould be entirely unnoticed by Heathen writers. How happened it that neither Pilate, nor any of the officers of the Roman garriſon then at Jeruſalem, ſhould have given to their curious friends at Rome and elſewhere, no account whatever of ſuch an uncommon phenomenon, accompanied even with the riſing of the dead out of the tombs? I ſhall here alſo obſerve, that the moſt ancient of the Chriſtian writers ſuppoſed, that the extraordinary darkneſs was cauſed by a ſolar eclipſe *; which was abandoned, when it was diſcovered by them, that, in the time of full moon, no ſolar eclipſe can take place.

The reader is not to imagine, by what I have juſt ſaid concerning Mr. Gibbon, that I have the preſumption to think myſelf competent to be his defender. His own vindication ſhews, that he wants no ally. Beſides, I think, that the general complexion of that

* See Lard. Art. Julius Africanus.

part

part of his hiſtory, which relates to Chriſtianity, as diſplaying the hand of an enemy, is juſtly cenſurable; and, with the impartial, muſt conſiderably leſſen the intended effect. For to ſuch it muſt immediately occur, "this is the relation of an enemy."

I ſhall no longer defer ſubmitting to the reader, what induces me to attend public worſhip at Mr. Lindſey's Chapel; where, as being an Ebionite, and of courſe not believing that Jeſus was the Chriſt, he might think, were I truly conſcientious, I ſhould not attend.

If the reader will look back to notes 29 and 30 of the Preliminary Diſquiſition to the firſt Part, he will perceive, that the *Simplices* and *Idiotæ* of Tertullian, and the *corporeal* believers of Origen, muſt have compoſed the greater part of Chriſtian aſſemblies. Now theſe *Simplices*, *Idiotæ*, and *corporeal believers*, it is clear, knew nothing of the divinity of Chriſt, and therefore deſerved at leaſt the title Ebionites; for theſe, as obſerved by Moſheim, did not ſeparate themſelves from other Chriſtians, by forming different congregations, for ſome ages after Chriſt: therefore, if perſons profeſſing this faith, attended Chriſtian meetings, in

which no mention was made of the divinity of Jeſus, nor prayer offered to him, I only follow the example of the early Ebionæans, by reſorting a Chriſtian aſſembly, in which a ſimilar mode of worſhip is, in the moſt explicit manner, profeſſed.

I will not deny, that I think it highly improper, that even the name of Jeſus Chriſt ſhould be at all introduced in prayers offered to the ONE only and TRUE GOD, as is practiſed in this aſſembly. For, it being the general ſentiment of the members of it, that Jeſus Chriſt was only a mere man, *like* unto Moſes, and in like manner commiſſioned as he was, it appears to me, that perſons thus thinking ſhould, like the Jews, who never introduced the name of Moſes in their addreſſes to the Deity, omit the name of Jeſus Chriſt alſo in their addreſſes to the Deity. I am aware, that this congregation is warranted in introducing his name in its addreſſes to the Deity, by ſeveral paſſages in Paul's Epiſtles; but, independently of their being no ſufficient external evidence to eſtabliſh the authenticity of theſe writings, I think that reflecting perſons, of the Humaniſt perſwaſion, ought to eſteem this not a weak argument againſt the genuineneſs

of

of thoſe Epiſtles in which ſuch paſſages are met with.

It being a pretty general opinion among Chriſtians, that miracles are a *deciſive* teſt of a perſon being divinely commiſſioned, I ſhall here mention what induces me, independently of the obvious objection to ſuch a proof of its requiring miraculous teſtimony to eſtabliſh it, to be of a contrary opinion; in which I conceive I am ſupported by *Scripture*; and which, in diſcuſſions of this nature, ſhould be held to be concluſive. By Scripture I mean the Word of God, as acknowledged by all believers in revealed religion. Some comprehend under this term, all the canonical books of the Old and New Teſtament; others allow, that errors and miſtakes have crept into theſe writings; and therefore, that they have a right to exerciſe their judgment, in ſelecting only what appears to them to be the genuine Word of God. For myſelf, I confine ſcripture to the moral and ritual law of Moſes, the firſt of which only reſpects me; neither do I think that this is totally free from impurities.

The following paſſages of Scripture appear to me to be deciſive againſt miracles being a teſt of a Divine miſſion:

miſſion: Deut. xiii. 1, 2, 3.—" If there ſhall ariſe " among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and " giveth thee a ſign or a wonder, and the ſign and the " wonder come to paſs whereof he ſpake unto thee, " ſaying, let us go after *other* Gods, which thou haſt " not known, and let us ſerve them; thou ſhalt not " hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that " dreamer of dreams: for the Lord your God pro- " veth you, to know whether you love the Lord your " God with all your heart, and with all your ſoul." Here the Iſraelites are cautioned againſt going after *other* Gods, even though ſigns and wonders were done to induce them to it. The Greek terms, here rendered by *ſigns* and *wonders*, are thoſe applied in the New Teſtament to the miracles of Chriſt: therefore, miracles are proſcribed by Jehovah as an argument to the Jews to follow other Gods. Again, Deut. xviii. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22. " I will raiſe them up a prophet " from among their brethren like unto thee, and will " put my words in his mouth, and he ſhall ſpeak unto " them all that I command him. And it ſhall come " to paſs, *that* whoſoever will not hearken unto my " words which he ſhall ſpeak in my name, I will

" require

" require it of him. But the prophet which ſhall
" preſume to ſpeak a word in my name, which I have
" not commanded him to ſpeak, or that ſhall ſpeak in
" the name of other Gods, even that prophet ſhall die.
" And if thou ſay in thine heart, how ſhall we know
" the word which the Lord hath not ſpoken? When
" a prophet ſpeaketh in the name of the Lord, if the
" thing follow not, nor come to paſs, that is the thing
" which the Lord hath not ſpoken, *but* the prophet
" hath ſpoken it preſumptuouſly; thou ſhalt not be
" afraid of him." Here we find the *teſt* of a perſon's being divinely commiſſioned, to be the *foretelling* ſomething which was *ſhortly* to happen. As to miracles being *ſuch* a teſt, the law of Moſes is entirely ſilent concerning them. And as it is declared, in Deut. iv. 2. " Thou ſhalt not add unto the word which I
" command you." Would it not be adding to the word to make miracles a teſt of a divinely commiſſioned perſon, when the word, or law itſelf, is entirely ſilent concerning them. Moreover, does not this very ſilence condemn miracles as a teſt? and ſurely with great reaſon: it being impoſſible in many inſtances for the ſpectator to draw the line between

natural

natural effects, and the arresting the *laws of nature*.

This leads me to what I hinted at, p. 6, Part first, concerning the origin of the term Christ. I then observed, that *every effect must have a proportionate cause*: now what cause could have induced the High Priest to call Jesus upon his trial, Christ, or the Anointed, or the Messiah, when he must have known that he had not been anointed; for by no other person could he have been legally anointed by, except by himself: And, admitting that he had come to the knowledge of his having been anointed by the woman prior to his trial, he could not have deemed such an anointing a legal anointing; nor of course have given him an appellation from it. Besides, there is no such term as Christ in the Hebrew language. It follows, therefore, that we must seek its origin in other languages.

The term Christ, as being a cognomen, or nickname, must be *significative*, and must have been applied either as a mark of honour, or of derision: that it was not given from the first motive, must be acknowledged, from the extreme unpopularity of the followers of Jesus for several years after his passion.

However,

However, this term as we find it actually *written*, is an honourable epithet. As it was firſt applied, according to the Acts of the Apoſtles, to the diſciples of Jeſus at Antioch, where the Greek language was chiefly ſpoken, it is clearly derived from a Greek term (krio), which ſignifies to anoint: but wherefore ſhould the Greeks call the followers of Jeſus, *the followers of the Anointed*, or Chriſtians? Beſides, had this name ſo honourable an origin, how happens it, as we ſhall preſently ſee, that St. Paul, as if *deſignedly*, avoids it, both with regard to himſelf, and to the other followers of Chriſt. We muſt therefore ſeek another ſource for this epithet.

Tertullian and Lactantius [See firſt Part, p. 6. note] have informed us, that this term was written Chreſtus by unbelievers. If this be allowed to be the proper mode of writing it, (and as an epithet applied by unbelievers to diſtinguiſh the followers of Jeſus, they ſhould ſurely be the beſt judges of the proper manner of writing it,) a very ſimple origin, for the name at once preſents itſelf, namely, that it is derived from the Greek term χραω (krao), which ſignifies to return an oracular anſwer, and therefore Chreſtus is equivalent to propheſier, and Chreſtians to followers of the Propheſier.

This origin of the name, being a diſhonourable one, is the more natural, from its having being given by unbelievers *. And that Chreſtus implied a bad meaning, is equally clear, from Tertullian and Lactantius giving themſelves the trouble of ſetting the Heathens right with reſpect to the proper mode of writing it. Farther, will not this origin of the name account for the manner in which Pliny expreſſes himſelf concerning it, *Nomen ipſum*, etiamſi flagitiis careat, an *flagitia cohaerentia nomini* puniantur †. Surely ſuch language was highly proper in the mouth of a Roman Proconſul, if Chreſtus be admitted to be the true mode of writing it, and that it is equivalent to propheſier; for people pretending to this character, however virtuous in themſelves, are ever, and with great reaſon, looked upon with a jealous eye by every government. This, admitting the genuineneſs of this letter, will, in a conſiderable degree, exculpate both Trajan and Pliny from the charge of cruelty, which have hitherto, with much juſtice, been imputed to them by Chriſtians. But, whether the letter be genuine, or not,

* Epiph. Hær. 29. S. 1.

† 'The appellation itſelf, though free from crimes, or having the crimes adhering to the appellation, ought to be puniſhed.'

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its extreme antiquity, being cited by Tertullian, equally ſupports my hypotheſis.

But it will be aſked, perhaps, why ſhould the Greeks call the followers of Jeſus *Chreſtians*; that is, followers of the Propheſier? That the name was not applied for ſome time after the crucifixion of Jeſus to his followers, is the unanimous teſtimony of antiquity: which to thoſe who look for a connection between effects and cauſes, muſt appear very extraordinary ſeeing that, according to the relations delivered in the Goſpels, he is upon his trial called Chriſt: and in a few years after, according to the Acts of the Apoſtles, his followers were very numerous, but, nevertheleſs, undiſtinguiſhed by any peculiar appellation: all this muſt ſurely appear very unaccountable. For my part, I am inclined to think, that the followers of Jeſus were not thus diſtinguiſhed till after the deſtruction of Jeruſalem by Titus, when his followers declared, that the event had been foretold by their Maſter Jeſus; alluding to the converſation which paſſed between him and the Apoſtles, concerning the deſtruction of Jeruſalem and its Temple; who upon that account acquired the name of Chreſ-

tians, or the followers of the Propheſier or Chreſtus.

Let us now examine whether facts accord with this theory; for if they do, I apprehend, it will be eſteemed a ſtrong argument in favour of the hypotheſis. Now, that Luke the Evangeliſt avoided uſing this term, will clearly appear from the following paſſage of Dr. Heuman's, who cannot be ſuppoſed to be partial to a theory unknown to him, cited by Lardner, vol. vi. p. 266. note *k*. Former edit. of the Hiſtory of the Apoſtles and Evangeliſts, vol. ii. p. 68. of which I ſhall only give a tranſlation, Lardner's works being now within the reach of every perſon. Dr. Heuman ſays, "But not "only it cannot be proved, that the diſciples of Chriſt "made uſe of the appellation of Chriſtians, but it may "alſo be denied with ſtrong arguments. For firſt Luke "ſhould, in the following chapters of his book, make "uſe of this appellation, if the Chriſtians of Antioch "had impoſed this name upon themſelves. But that "is not done even once by him, for as before he called "the profeſſors of the Chriſtian religion, ſometimes "diſciples, chap. i. 15. vi. 1, 2, 7. ix. 1, 10, 19, 25, "26, 36.; ſometimes brothers, ix. 30. x. 23. xi. 1, "12.

" 12; once even 'them that believed,' iv. 32; and " once the ſaints, ix. 32. Thus after mentioning the " riſe of the name of the Chriſtians, he once calls them, " 'they which believed,' xxi. 25. In other places, either " 'diſciples,' xi. 29. xiii. 52. xiv. 20, 28. xvi. 1. xviii. " 23, 27. xix. 1, 9. xx. 1, 7, 30. xxi. 4, 16. or bro- " thers, xi. 29. xii. 17. xv. 1, 3, 22, 23, 32, 33, 40. " xvi. 2, 40. xvii. 6, 10, 14. xviii. 18. xxi. 7, 17. xxviii. " 14, 15." And in the ſubſequent note, ſhewing that St. Paul in like manner declined the uſe of it, Dr. Heuman ſays, " If in that time in which Paul " taught at Antioch, the diſciples of Chriſt had of their " own accord aſſumed this name, *it cannot be doubted* " but that the Apoſtle [Paul] would have made uſe of " this appellation in his epiſtles. But he always makes " uſe of another name. In his exordiums he is accuſ- " tomed to call them ſaints. Having got a fit occaſion " of calling them Chriſtians, Rom. vii. 9. Gal. v. 24. " he choſe nevertheleſs to call them *thoſe of Chriſt.* " Nay when Agrippa, Acts xxvi. 28. uttered theſe " words, " almoſt thou perſuadeſt me to be a Chriſti- " an:" as if avoiding the name, he does not thus anſwer " him, *I would that thou wert a Chriſtian*, but " I would " that thou wert ſuch as I am." That paſſage in Gal. i.

" 22.

" 22. is remarkable; for there Paul does not ſay " *Chriſ-*
" *tian churches*," but churches " which were in Chriſt."
" In like manner, 1 Tim. v. 16, where he could ſay, *if*
" *any Chriſtian man or woman*, he thus ſpeaks, " if any
" man or woman that believeth." Now can it be
" believed, if the Church itſelf had been the author of
" this appellation, that Paul would have ſo *ſtudiouſly*
" *avoided* the making uſe of it? I remember, alſo, that
" Iſidore of Peluſium, formerly propoſed this queſtion,
" l. iv. ep. 61, Why has Paul no where made uſe of
" the name of Chriſtian? but there is no anſwer to it."

The learned Doctor ſuppoſes, that Luke and Paul avoided uſing the name, leaſt people might imagine that Chriſt was only like the ordinary leaders of ſects; but how much more probable is it to ſuppoſe, that they did ſo to avoid an opprobious appellation. Moreover, that this term was not eſteemed of any conſequence at all by the primitive Chriſtians, may be fairly deduced from Tertullian's ſaying againſt Praxeas, that it was a mere accident that Jeſus was ſo called; for that he might be as well called coated, booted, as anointed—*Itaque Chriſtum facis patrem ſtultiſſime, qui nec ipſam vim inſpicias nominis hujus, ſi tamen nomen*

eſt

eſt Chriſtus, et non appellatio potius; unctus enim ſignificatur. Unctus autem non magis nomen eſt, quam veſtitus, quam calceatus accidens nominis res. c. 28 *.

I ſhall now lay before the reader thoſe reaſons which have induced me to think that *the Hebrews believing in Chriſt, Jews, Samaritans, Nicolaitans, Nazarenes, Ebionites, Elceſaites, Oſſens, Cerinthians, Carpocratians, Maſſalians or Enthuſiaſts*, were only different appellations of one ſect; and that there was no other differences between them of any conſequence, except that ſome of thoſe appellations were peculiarly applied to the Hebrew believers in Jeſus, and ſome to thoſe of the Gentiles who entertained the ſame opinion of him as the Hebrew believers; except that the term Jews ſometimes ſignifies, in the ancient writers, unbelieving Hebrews; but in general, I apprehend it will be found to be applied rather to the Gentile believers, who thought as the Hebrew believers; and that the

* You make the Father to be Chriſt, you fooliſh blockhead, who do not conſider the meaning itſelf of this name, if indeed it be a name, and not rather an appellation; for it ſignifies being anointed. But being anointed is no more a name than being coated, being booted; being only the accident of a name.

general

general appellation of theſe laſt, and *peculiarly* applied to them, was Nazarenes.

Upon reading over Dr. Lardner's Hiſtory of Heretics; and after having hit upon, as I apprehended, the *jet* of the Gnoſtic hereſy, or the cauſe which gave riſe to it, and the appellation, namely, the ambition of being able to account for the evil which is obſervable both in the phyſical and moral world upon the principles of natural reaſon, as already obſerved in the Preliminary Diſquiſition to the firſt Part of this work; the origin, or the reaſon, of the appellation of Chriſtians occurring to me about the ſame time, I was particularly attentive to what ſects this epithet was applied. I had always thought it very extraordinary, that in all Dr. Prieſtley's writings, who preſumes that the Nazarenes and Ebionites were *one ſect*, and the genuine diſciples or converts of the apoſtles of Jeſus among the Jews and Gentiles, I never perceived any paſſage from the Fathers which *expreſsly* aſſerted it, though I entertained no doubt myſelf of the truth of the fact. This I conſidered as a very ſtrong preſumptive argument in ſupport of my

own

own hypotheſis, that the epithet of Chriſtus was no other than that of Chreſtus written with an *i*, which changed its meaning from *Propheſier* to *Anointed*; and which attached to certain ſect or ſects of the followers of Jeſus, but was diſregarded by others: and that by the change of a letter, what was originally intended as an opprobious name, became an honourable appellation; and that, in conſequence of this ſect aſſuming the honourable appellation of Chriſtian, they maintained that they derived it from Jeſus, who was the *Meſſiah* foretold by the Jewiſh prophets; which term was equivalent to the Greek term *Chriſtus*, or anointed. What further induced me to imagine that all the other appellations were only different names of Ebionites or Nazarenes, was, that I perceived that they were all believers in Jeſus, in ſome ſenſe or other; but ſtill that they were not, no more than the Ebionites or Nazarenes, ever called Chriſtians. I then paid particular attention to the tenets of all thoſe ſects who believed ſome how or other in Jeſus, and yet were never called Chriſtians; and from the coincidence in ſome main points, I entertained no doubt myſelf, but

that the appellation of Ebionite might juſtly be predicated of each of them. And I cannot ſay how much I was ſurpriſed, and, I may add, pleaſed, at finding this hypotheſis ſupported by the teſtimony of Epiphanius and Theodoret. The coincidences which I remarked, are as follow:

Firſt, They [Ebionites and Nazarenes] maintained, that Jehovah, the God of Iſrael, was the *Maker* of this world; which diſtinguiſhed them from the Gnoſtics, who held, that it was made by angels, or a created and finite intelligence; as alſo, from the Catholics, who held, that it was made by the God-Word, or begotten Son of God.

Secondly, They all agreed, or rather there is nothing aſſerted to the contrary by the Fathers, in worſhipping ONE GOD, the Jehovah of the Hebrews, and Him *only*. Whereas the Gnoſtics did not worſhip Jehovah at all, holding Him to be either a finite, or malevolent Being. The Chriſtians, on the other hand, though they worſhipped the Jehovah of Iſrael, nevertheleſs, added another object to their religious worſhip, namely, Jeſus, whom they called the Chriſt, or the Meſſiah.

Meſſiah. At what time Chriſt was introduced as a *public* object of worſhip, cannot, I apprehend, be now determined. When Origen wrote his Treatiſe upon Prayer *, from his expreſſly affirming that prayer was only due to the Father, and not to Chriſt, it is clear that, at that time, he was not a *public* object of worſhip. However, that *learned* Chriſtians thought that he *ought* to be worſhipped, is plain from the paſſages of the ſame Origen, alluded to by Dr. Knowles in his *Primitive Chriſtianity*. Novatus, who flouriſhed a little later than Origen, ſeems alſo to exclude him as an object of worſhip †. This latter evidently expreſſes himſelf as having a dread of the Praxean, or perhaps the Sabellian hereſy. Without being at all poſitive, I am inclined to think, that Jeſus Chriſt was not univerſally acknowledged, by the Catholics, to be an object of *public* worſhip, till after the council of Nice; when by declaring him to be Homoouſios, or one ſubſiſtence with the Father, they might ſafely affirm that they worſhipped only *one* God. Tertullian alſo, who held that the Father and Son were *one* ſubſiſtence, comparing the Trinity to a tree, cannot, I apprehend,

* See Firſt Part, p. 46, † Preliminary Diſquiſition, p. 47, n.

be juſtly taxed with Polytheiſm: but when the Catholics, in conſequence of the Sabellian hereſy, had *divided* the ſubſiſtencies, it muſt clearly follow, that did they at the ſame time worſhip Jeſus Chriſt, they would then have had *two ſeparated* objects of worſhip; and therefore could not have avoided the imputation of being Polytheiſts: but when the virtue of the term Homoouſios had been *revealed* to Athanaſius, the Catholics might and did maintain that they held one God and three Gods at the ſame time, or a Trinity in Unity, or a Unity in Trinity. So that the foundation of the Catholic faith, and I may add of its eccleſiaſtical polity, was laid at the council of Nice. This is farther ſupported from the Catholics, in their controverſies with the Arians and other heretics, never referring to the writers of the firſt centuries, particularly to the apoſtolical or primitive Fathers, nor, I may add, to thoſe of the third century, for a perfect developement of the true Catholic faith: their references to theſe being only upon ſingle, detached, heads. For inſtance, did they want to prove the Father and Son *one*, Tertullian was authority for this: did they want to prove the ſeparation of the ſubſiſtencies, or

that

that the Father and Son were *two*, the apoſtolical and primitive Fathers might be cited in ſupport of this opinion, which, together with their being acquainted with the *ſufferings* of God, points out *their* age; namely, after the Sabellian hereſy. And the writings, aſcribed to them. were impoſed on the world as the productions of holy men, who lived in the age of the apoſtles, to confute that hereſy. But the divine ſubſiſtencies being in theſe writings too much ſeparated, and, perhaps, the forgery of them being too well known, they ſeem to have been little attended to by the Catholics of the fourth and fifth centuries; though by our modern Doctors they are held in the higheſt eſteem: and this too though they abound with *lying puerilities*, that would ſcarcely be borne by the weakeſt fanatics of the preſent age: and which prove, beyond a doubt, of what ſort the converts to Chriſtianity were in the third century, when theſe writings were forged. However, an eccleſiaſtical polity, deſigned with the deepeſt foreſight, and perfected in about a century and an half, enabled the Catholics ſucceſsfully to contend with, and finally to cruſh, all their rivals.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, All these sects agreed in maintaining, that Jesus Christ was a *mere man*. What is said of Cerinthus, that he held, that Jesus was under the tutelage of a superior angelic Being, called the Christ, is utterly improbable. For he is allowed to have been a Jew, and to have lived in the apostolic age. Now, it is impossible that any Jew, without forgetting Jehovah and Moses, could ever entertain such a notion. Did he hold this opinion, he would have been a Gnostic; and then, contrary to the express testimony of Firmilian and Cyprian *, who flourished so much nearer the time, there would have been Gnostics in the apostolic age. Moreover, the ridiculous story which is related, both of Cerinthus and of Ebion, concerning St. John's refusing to go into the same bath with one or other of them, lest it might fall on him for being in company with such an impious wretch, is, independently of its improbability, difficult to be reconciled with chronology. The age of these two heretics, whom I scruple not to pronounce to be fictitious personages, is not determined by the Fathers; some of them placing them earlier, others later, which, when it happens to

* See Preliminary Disquisition, p. 39.

the

the *heads of ſects*, ſhould be eſteemed a ſtrong preſumptive argument againſt their ever having had a real exiſtence.

Farther, that Cerinthus was an Ebionite, did ever ſuch a perſon exiſt, may be well preſumed from the place which he occupies in Epiphanius; who places him after Carpocrates, who held that Jeſus was a *mere man:* next follows Cerinthus, who, according to him, maintained the ſame opinion: then follow the Nazarenes and Ebionites, whoſe opinions on this head were the ſame: after whom he places Valentinus, the Gnoſtic. Now the hereſy *preceding* that of the Carpocratians is that of the Gnoſtics: ſo that it may be inferred from Epiphanius, that he preſumed that the Carpocratians, Cerinthians, Nazarenes, and Ebionites, agreed in *certain eſſentials*; and for which reaſon he placed them in ſucceſſion: or that, by placing them between two orders of Gnoſtics, he held that they were a *third* order; an opinion too abſurd to be admiſſible.

Theodoret is ſtill more ſatisfactory on this head. After treating of the different ſorts of Gnoſtics in his firſt book; he devotes his ſecond entirely to thoſe who held that Jeſus was a *mere man*; amongſt whom he

he places Cerinthus, and of courſe acknowledged him not as a Gnoſtic. It is true, he places Carpocrates among the Gnoſtics; and very juſtly, could his account be depended on. For he imputes to him the fooliſh notion, that this world was made by *Angels*; which was therefore the cauſe of moral and phyſical evil, as proceeding or being the work of finite Beings. But what he ſays upon this head is utterly improbable, and reſts upon the teſtimony of Irenæus; whom I ſhall elſewhere ſhew to have been a fictitious perſonage; who however has had the modeſty to ſay, that what he ſaid of the Cerinthians was very improbable; but that he had found it *ſo* written in their books. Theodoret, l. i. c. 5.

Fourthly, Thoſe believers in Jeſus, who are not by any of the Fathers called Chriſtians, agreed in encouraging the *propagation of the human ſpecies*, and being enemies of Encratiſm, or thoſe whimſical opinions which condemned fleſhly enjoyments. This peculiarity of ſentiment was, in theſe early ages of Chriſtianity, as diſtinguiſhing a characteriſtic of a ſect as any other. Men, when left to their own fancies, imagine, that, by not indulging their natural deſires, they render

them-

themſelves more pleaſing in the eyes of God: and it requires ſome philoſophy to be ſenſible of the folly of ſuch a notion. Now, however learned and ſenſible the Gnoſtics were in other reſpects, they were the firſt, among the followers of Jeſus, who taught Encratiſm: for which they are condemned in the Epiſtles *aſcribed* to Saint Paul; and alſo by the Orthodox of the ſecond century. Towards the latter end of the third century, the Orthodox themſelves thought, that denying the fleſhly appetites, implied ſuperior holineſs. But upon this head, as well as upon every other which diſtinguiſhed thoſe ſects, who were not honoured with the appellation of Chriſtian, and which I call by the general name of Ebionite, there does not appear ever to have been but *one* ſentiment concerning theſe four points. Their being enemies to Encratiſm, is beſides in perfect conſonance with the Moſaic diſpenſation; which, if derived from God, as Moſes has declared, and that That by Jeſus had the ſame origin, evinces a perfect agreement between the two diſpenſations: which muſt be the fact, if both were derived from the only ALL-PERFECT,

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ALL-POWERFUL, and ALL-WISE BEING: the former being intended for the deſcendants of Abraham only, the ritual part of it to diſtinguiſh them *for ever* from all the reſt of mankind; the diſpenſation by Jeſus being only the moral law of Moſes, which was propoſed to the Gentiles through the medium of the Apoſtles, and their ſucceſſors, to the Heathens, for the regulation of their moral conduct, without any obligation on them of conforming to the ceremonial law of Moſes.

Now that I am ſupported by Epiphanius and Theodoret in making thoſe four tenets characteriſtick of the Ebionæan ſects hence appears: Epiphanius, Hær. xxx. S. 2. ſays, "*Virginity* and *Encratiſm* are now entirely prohibited among them [Ebionites] as alſo among the *other* Hereſies of *this ſort* *."

Theodoret ſays, Hær. f. l. ii. c. 1. "But beſides this, there is another claſs of the ſame name (for they alſo are called Ebionites, who confeſs all other

* Τα νυν δε απηγορευται πανταπασι παρ' αυτοις παρθενια η ενκρατια, ως η παρα ταις αλλαις ομοιαις ταυτη αιρεσεσι.

things

" things with the former), and [which] ſay, that the " Saviour and Lord was born of a Virgin *."

Note. This paſſage is differently expounded by Sirmond and Garnerius: The former thus renders it: Alia præter hanc claſſis fuit, nominis ejuſdem; nam et Ebionei quoque vocantur. Qui in ceteris quidem omnibus cum prioribus conveniunt; ſervatorem vero et Dominum ex virgine natum dicunt. Garnerius in this manner: Alia præter hanc claſſis fuit nominis ejuſdem: nam et Ebionæi quoque vocantur qui in ceteris omnibus cum prioribus conveniunt; ſervatorem vero et Dominum ex Virgine natum dicunt †.

* Αλλη δε παρα ταυτην συμμορια, την αυτην επωνυμιαν εχουσα, Εβιωνεις γαρ ουτοι προσαγορευονται, τα αλλα μεν απαντα συνομολογει τοις προτεροις, τον δε σωτηρα και κυριον εκ παρθενου γεγεννησθαι.

† [Marius Mercator, p. 306.] The material difference between them is, that in Garnerius's expoſition, the reaſon of the Ebionite appellation is clearly aſſigned; namely, that all thoſe who agreed in certain points, were called Ebionæans: whereas this is not the clear ſenſe of the paſſage according to Sirmond: but that Garnerius's is the true expoſition, is evident for this reaſon, that *for they alſo are called Ebionæans who confeſs all other things as the former* is clearly a parentheſis, which may be totally taken away without injuring the ſenſe of the paſſage, and I have therefore put it into a parentheſis. It may be beſides obſerved, that Sirmond's punctuation is abſurd, as beginning a period with the relative

What then were thoſe *other things*, the confeſſing of which obtained the appellation of Ebionite. Theodoret informs us in the preceding part of this chapter, in giving us the tenets of the Ebionites who held "That "there was *one* unbegotten, in like manner with ourſelves, and taught that he was the *Maker* of the world: "and he ſaid, that the Lord Jeſus was born of Joſeph "and Mary, being indeed a man excelling other "[men] in virtue and innocence, and he lived (or, "that he lived) according to the law of Moſes*."

It hence follows, that all thoſe who held *one* unbegotten, and that—*He* was the *Maker* of the world—and that Jeſus Chriſt was begotten both of Joſeph and Mary, were, according to Theodoret, entitled to the appellation of Ebionites; and according to Epiphanius, all theſe ſects were entitled to the ſame appellation

lative *qui*. Moreover, the Greek relative οὗτοι, being in the plural number, muſt have, in the *learned* Theodoret's mind, plural antecedents, and in the *ſame* gender. Farther, had Garnerius, been ſatisfied with Sirmond's expoſition, it is to be preſumed that he would have followed it.

* Οὗτος ἕνα μὲν τὸν ἀγέννητον ἔφη παραπλησίως ἡμῖν, καὶ αὐτὸν ἐδείξεν εἶναι τῶ κόσμω δημιουργὸν· τὸν δὲ κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν ἐξ Ἰωσὴφ καὶ ἐκ τῆς Μαρίας ἔφησε γεγεννῆσθαι, ἄνθρωπον μὲν ὄντα, ἀρετῆ δὲ καὶ καθαρότητι τῶν ἄλλων διαφέροντα· κατὰ δὲ τὸν Μωσαϊκὸν πολιτεύσασθαι νόμον.

which

which prohibited *virginity* and *Encratiſm*. This appeared to me very clear, from the peruſal of Lardner's Hiſtory of Heretics, before I had ever conſulted any of the Fathers.

Before I proceed to lay before the reader the opinion entertained by thoſe *different* ſects, to which the ancients have *not* given the appellation of Chriſtian, and whom I heſitate not to pronounce to be eſſentially only *one* ſect, I think it not irrelevant to obſerve, that though ſo many ſects are mentioned by them either to have believed, that there was only one God, the *Jehovah* of Iſrael, the *Maker* of this world, to be worſhipped—and that Jeſus was only a *mere man*—and who practiſed, or did not condemn thoſe who embraced, the Jewiſh ritual law—and that deſpiſed holineſs founded ſolely upon the non-gratification of our natural deſires—any one of which was characteriſtical of the Ebionæan ſects: yet I am far from thinking, notwithſtanding what the Fathers ſay, that they were divided into ſo many ſects, as the appellations which I contend for to be only different names of one and the ſame ſect: or to expreſs myſelf more diſtinctly, I hold, that the Hebrew Ebionites were called by their unconverted brethren *Nazarenes*, and by the

Chriſtians,

Chriſtians, Hebrews believing in Chriſt, or Nazarenes or *Ebionites*; and that no ſuch ſect as the Elceſaites, Oſſens, &c. ever had an actual exiſtence diſtinct from the other Nazarenes; but that ſuch ſects, as well as the founders of them, Elxai, &c. owe their exiſtence to the fruitful brains of Monks. In like manner I hold, that as an actual exiſting ſect, the Gentile Ebionites were known only under the appellation of *Jews* and *Maſſalians*, and who were beſides nicknamed *Ebionites*; though, perhaps, the *three* were only nicknames. The Fathers were at a loſs what to call them, being neither, ſtrictly ſpeaking, Jews nor Gentiles, as Jerome expreſſes himſelf concerning them: and that no ſuch ſects ever actually exiſted as the Carpocratians, Cerinthians, &c. To lay before the reader what induces me to be of this opinion, with regard to each of them, would be fatiguing and tedious; I ſhall therefore only attempt it with regard to one, namely, Cerinthus and the Cerinthians; and I pitch upon this hereſy in preference to that of any of the others, as it is more particularly and poſitively mentioned by celebrated moderns, as having had a real, actual, exiſtence, than any of the others; and ſhould I ſucceed in

ſhewing

ſhewing my opinion tolerably well founded with regard to this heretic, I apprehend it ſhould be concluded that I would ſucceed equally with regard to the others did I attempt it. Mr. Gibbon and Dr. Prieſtley ſpeak of the Cerinthian Gnoſtics: Biſhop Horſley ſays, that Cerinthus *unqueſtionably* exiſted in the apoſtolic age: and he beſides makes him a Gnoſtic: however, this *unqueſtionably* is totally overthrown by the expreſs teſtimony of Firmilian and Cyprian againſt the exiſtence of *Gnoſtics* in the apoſtolic age, not conceiving that any one would be ſo *fooliſh* as to maintain it, much more *unqueſtionably*: however, his Lordſhip fulfils the old remark, that the ignorant are ever the moſt poſitive.

What induces me to think that no ſuch ſect or perſon as Cerinthus or Cerinthians ever actually exiſted is, that had ſuch a ſect ever exiſted, Epiphanius could never have had a doubt whether the head or firſt author of it was called Cerinthus or Merinthus: for the ſect, deriving its appellation from its head, muſt have removed the doubt, had ſuch a ſect ever had had a real exiſtence, much more ſo had it exiſted to the time of Epiphanius. This doubt of itſelf ſhould

have

have prevented his Lordſhip from uſing the term *unqueſtionable*, as his Lordſhip has himſelf quoted the paſſage which expreſſes the doubt. I think, therefore, it will be granted to me, that no ſuch perſon or ſect ever exiſted as Cerinthus or Cerinthians: but in this I think wrong: Has not the *bleſſed* Irenæus, that holy and *peaceful* man, declared, that he read the books of the Cerinthians, ſee p. 193, and how could he have read their books if ſuch a ſect never had had an exiſtence? However, not to deal farther in irony, this argument againſt the exiſtence of the Cerinthians ſhould be deemed a ſtrong preſumptive one againſt the writings of the *peaceful** Irenæus being founded upon facts, and not, as they evidently do, upon Monkiſh viſions.

I ſhall now lay before the reader what has farther occurred to me concerning the Ebionites in peruſing the Fathers, and afterwards concerning thoſe other ſects which I have preſumed to be only different nicknames or appellations of the ſame Ebionites: comparing theſe opinions will farther enable the reader to judge of the probability of my hypotheſis. However,

* Irenæus ſignifies peaceful in the Greek language.

I ſhall

I ſhall only notice what I think to be well founded. It would be eaſy to collect a long catalogue of the fouleſt imputations; but then theſe are, in many reſpects, incompatible with *acknowledged* virtues; and, as both cannot be true, I have choſen to give credit to the latter, as being acknowledged by enemies.

I will begin with laying before him their opinions concerning the books which compoſe the Old and New Teſtament. Of the latter Euſebius informs us*, "that making uſe of the Goſpel only according to the "Hebrews, they made little account *of the reſt.*" From his manner of expreſſing himſelf, it ſeems that Euſebius thought that *one* of our Goſpels was by them called *according to the Hebrews:* however, Epiphanius ſays expreſsly, that the Ebionites made uſe of the Goſpel of Matthew, but at the ſame time he obſerves that it was mutilated. He alſo obſerves, that Matthew was the only one who wrote a Goſpel in *Hebrew*; yet this Hebrew Goſpel of Matthew, according to himſelf, began with ſo palpable an anachroniſm, that it is difficult, nay ſcarcely poſſible to conceive a

* See First Part, p. 19.

Hebrew could have fallen into; ſtill more, that a ſect of Hebrew converts ſhould ignorantly perſevere in: for this Goſpel began thus: "It came to paſs in the "days of Herod *king* of Judea, Caiaphas being high "prieſt, a certain man named John came baptiſing," &c. Now, according to Luke's Goſpel, this tranſaction took place in the reign of Herod the Tetrarch, the ſon of Herod the king, or *thirty* years later. This, then, is too groſs an error not to have been inſtantly perceived, and of courſe would be amended according to the truth of hiſtory; ſo that it is not improbable but that the holy Father, who was credulous, was impoſed on in this reſpect. Theodoret alſo ſays, that Ebion alſo made uſe of the Goſpel of Matthew; but he ſays that the Nazarenes made uſe of the Goſpel of Peter: now that the Goſpel of Peter was the ſame as the Goſpel of Mark is evident from the teſtimony of Clemens I.* And as Theodoret informs us, that the Nazarenes were *Hebrews*, it follows that this Goſpel, to be of any uſe to them, muſt have been written in the Hebrew tongue, which confutes the notion of Epiphanius, that Matthew's Goſpel was the

* See Preliminary Diſquiſition, p. 24. n.

only

only Goſpel written in that language. Moreover, it proves that this was the Goſpel according to the Hebrews; for certainly that Goſpel which was made uſe of *by the Hebrews* muſt have acquired this appellation from them, and not a Goſpel that was not made uſe of by them. Hence it alſo follows, that as the Ebionites made uſe of the Goſpel *according to the Hebrews*; and as the Nazarenes were Hebrews, and the Goſpel of Peter or Mark was the only Goſpel made uſe of by them, which therefore muſt have acquired the appellation of the goſpel according to the Hebrews, from the Hebrew believers who only made uſe of it, that the Ebionites and Nazarenes made uſe of the ſame Goſpel, namely, *the Goſpel of Mark*. The Nazarenes and Ebionites profeſſing the ſame opinions, it is highly probable, independently of what has been already ſaid, that they made uſe of the ſame Goſpel. Elſewhere I ſhall ſhew that the Goſpel of Mark, being the only Goſpel which records tranſactions, agreeably to the cuſtoms and manners which prevailed among the Jews, is the only Goſpel which could be received as genuine by the believers from among that people.

Epiphanius alſo informs us, Hær. 30. S. 3. that the Sampſenians, Oſſens, Elceſaites, and Cerinthians made uſe of the Goſpel of Matthew only, which they called the Goſpel *according to the Hebrews*. In Section the 14th, he ſays, that Carpocrates and Cerinthus "attempted to prove, from the beginning and ge-"nealogy of this Goſpel (Matthew's) that Jeſus was "begotten both of Joſeph and Mary." The former teſtimony muſt be allowed to be a ſtrong preſumptive argument that the Sampſenians, Oſſens, Elceſaites, and Cerinthians, were Ebionites or Nazarenes: whether the ſame is to be inferred reſpecting Carpocrates, let the reader determine. That he was not a Gnoſtic, however, is evident; as all the Gnoſtics held the books of the New Teſtament in contempt. Epiphanius beſides obſerves, that Elxai, the founder of the Elceſaite ſect, joined himſelf to the Ebionites.

With regard to the Old Teſtament, Epiphanus obſerves, Hær. 30. S. 15 and 18. "That, after Moſes, "the Ebionites acknowledged no prophet except "Joſhua; that they proſcribed with an anathema, "execrated, and held in deriſion, David and Solo-"mon, Iſaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel and Ezekiel, and

"rejected

" rejected Elijah and Eliſha, and all the prophets. " Moreover, that they only *partially* received the " Pentateuch." If this ſect be allowed to have been the genuine and true diſciples of Jeſus, as Dr. Prieſtley contends, it is needleſs to ſay what opinion ought to be entertained of our ſacred books. As there is no difference of opinion concerning their notion of our ſacred volumes, it were unneceſſary to adduce farther proofs of it. And I muſt own that, independently of the Ebionite opinion concerning them, they do not merit, in my apprehenſion, greater eſteem, if obtruded as equivalent to the word of God. For, not to particularize the uſeleſs miracles with which they abound, who can credit the converſation of Balaam with his aſs—Elijah's conteſt with the prieſts of Baal —Jonah and the whale—and Daniel's fiery furnace—and molten golden image. With regard to this laſt, I affirm, that had the Babylonian artiſts a maſs of gold equal to make an image ſixty cubits, or about one hundred and ten feet high, they would not have been able to have made an image of that ſize, though aided by Grecian ingenuity. Mr. Gibbon has obſerved, that a ſtatue *ſixty feet* high is equal in bulk to a thouſand

men.

men. Such a ſtatue then as Daniel mentions would be equal in bulk to *ſeveral* thouſands. The deſcriptions of the walls of Nineveh and Babylon, and the hanging gardens of the latter, are totally unworthy of any credit being given to them, and fit only for romances; and evidently owe their birth to Eaſtern or Monkiſh fancy. The walls of the former, notwithſtanding their dimenſions and ſolidity, were inviſible two thouſand years ago, which was but a few centuries after the magnificent deſcriptions of them in the Old Teſtament. The prophecy of Iſaiah was evidently compoſed after the events mentioned in it: and it is equally obvious, that it has been greatly interpolated by Chriſtians, to favour their notion of the miraculous conception, and of the Meſſiah; or perhaps by Jews, to amuſe themſelves at the expence of Chriſtian credulity. Our divines, having expended ſo much of their learning, labours, and ſagacity, in expounding, explaining, and obviating the difficulties which occur in our ſacred volumes, before they had eſtabliſhed their antiquity, appear to me to have acted ſo preposterous a part, that Mr. Gibbons, predicating *rationality* of any of them, with reſpect to theological

enquiries

enquiries, ſtruck me as a bold poſition; and as ſuch I have remarked it. But it is only concerning this one point, that I impute to them a want of rationality. For their ſpeculations frequently afford ample teſtimony of great erudition, and uncommon ſagacity.

I ſhall now mention what has induced me to think that Ebionites were commonly diſtinguiſhed by the appellation of *Jews*, by the ancients.

Firſt, The reader muſt have perceived, from many paſſages cited in theſe ſheets, how frequently thoſe followers of Jeſus who held that he was only a *mere man* are ſaid, by the Fathers, to have thought *as* the Jews. Now to compare *ſuch* believers to *un*believing Hebrews would be abſurd; for, with what propriety could it be affirmed, that thoſe believers in Jeſus who held that he was a *mere man*, but of the *pureſt* manners and *greateſt innocency* of life, thought *like* thoſe who believed that he was an *impoſtor*. Had I not expreſs teſtimony, that the epithet 'Jews' ſometimes deſignated perſons who, in ſome ſenſe or other, acknowledged the divine miſſion of Jeſus, it might be juſtly inferred even from the compariſon. However, independently of this, we are informed, in the provincial letter of the

Emperor

Emperor Conſtantine the Great *, that there were Jews who ſolemnized the feaſt of the Paſſover *twice* every year. Theſe could not have been *unbelieving* Jews. What reaſon could have induced ſuch to celebrate *two* Paſſovers? Admitting they were believers in the divine miſſion of Jeſus, they might, with Chriſtians, have celebrated the feaſt of Eaſter, which they held to be equivalent to the Jewiſh Paſſover; and the Jewiſh Paſſover with the Hebrews. This would be receiving the NEW, but in ſuch a manner as not to looſe the OLD †.

Farther, Origen informs us, " That of the *Jews* " *who believed*, ſome acknowledged Jeſus to be a mere " man; others of them, that he was miraculouſly " begotten, however diſbelieving his divinity ‡." Now, independently of no Hebrew having ever given credit to the miraculous conception, Theodoret ſaying, that the Nazarenes were Jews [that is, *Jewiſh* Jews, I apprehend] who thought Jeſus was a *juſt man*, would ſurely, as he had juſt done before with regard to the Ebionites, have informed us, if any of the Hebrews,

* Euſ. de Vit. Conſt. l. iii, c. 18. † See Hiſt. op. V.

‡ See Firſt Part, p. 104.

who

who were believers, had entertained ſuch a prepoſterous notion: I ſay, independently of this, it appears from Euſebius uſing almoſt the ſame phraſeology concerning the Ebionites, as Origen has done of theſe believing Jews, that they had both the ſame ſect in view; and perhaps it will be thought, that Euſebius even adopted Origen's language. Euſebius ſays *, ſpeaking of the Ebionites, "that ſome of them believed Chriſt "to be a mere man, begotten of Joſeph and Mary; "others of them, called *by the ſame name*, who ac- "knowledged Chriſt to be begotten of the virginity "by the Holy Spirit, but denying, as well as the "former, that he had, as being the Word and Wiſ- "dom of God, pre-exiſted." See alſo the paſſage from Theodoret, quoted Firſt Part, p. 244; where, with reſpect to the preſent queſtion, he makes uſe of the ſame language concerning the Ebionites.

Socrates, l. v. c. 22, makes mention of two ſorts of Jews, the *older*, and the *younger*; the latter of which were, according to him, always erring: not ſo the former; which evinces, that both ſorts were not deſcended from Abraham.

* H. E. l. iii. c. 27.

What Sozomen ſays, in the Proem of his Hiſtory, is very remarkable, and may be deemed deciſive upon the preſent queſtion: his words are, "It has often occurred to me, whilſt reflecting what can be the cauſe, that other people are ſo ready in profeſſing a faith in the God-Word; but that the HEBREWS ſhould be ſo incredulous (δυσπιστος) on this head, notwithſtanding the advantages which accrued to them from their Prophets, by whom they were taught concerning the advent or coming of Chriſt, in what manner it would be before it happened." That the *Hebrews*, in this paſſage, were the deſcendants of Abraham, cannot be diſputed: and that thoſe perſons whom he elſewhere diſtinguiſhes by the epithet Jews were not Hebrews, is alſo evident, from their not having been ſo incredulous as above repreſented by him. For in l. iv. c. 5, he obſerves, that many (πολλους) of the Gentiles and *Jews* were converted to Chriſtianity, in conſequence of an amazing great croſs which, if we believe Cyril Biſhop of Jeruſalem, appeared in the heavens, whilſt he governed that church. This miraculous appearance is rejected by the Catholics themſelves, as having happened

pened whilſt the Church was oppreſſed by an Arian prince; and becauſe the phenomenon was aſſerted by Cyril to be a declaration of Heaven in his favour. However, the lying report, as frequently happens now-a-days, produced ſome converts to Catholiciſm from among the *Jews*, who could not ſurely be called incredulous, if ſuch ſilly ſtories impoſed on them.

Moreover, we are informed by Theodoret, who was contemporary with Socrates and Sozomen, "that "the Nazarenes were *Jews*, and that Trypho the "Jew, againſt whom Juſtin Martyr wrote, was a Na-"zarene *." It follows then, that one of theſe terms was included in the other: but, according to Origen †, the double Ebionites, who were doubtleſs not Hebrews, were nevertheleſs called Jews; it therefore follows, that the term Jew had a more comprehenſive import than that of Nazarene, or Ebionite; and that, in fact, it comprehended both thoſe ſects of believers in Jeſus: and that the only differences between them were, that one [Ebionite] comprehended ſuch be-

* Hær. F. l, ii; c. 2. † Compare Preliminary Diſquiſition, p. 5, n. with p. 232, Second Part.

lievers in Jeſus as thought him to be a man only, who were of heathen extraction: the other [Nazarene] thoſe Hebrews who thought the ſame, and acknowledged his divine miſſion. Perceiving no defect in this argument, it will follow, that the learned Symmachus, who is mentioned expreſsly by Theodoret to have been an Ebionite, was of Gentile and not of Hebrew extraction, as I believe is univerſally held by the moderns. And that Trypho, Juſtin's fictitious Jew, was a Nazarene, or a believer in the divine miſſion of Jeſus, who thought, that the miraculous conception was an old woman's ſtory *.

From all this it appears, that the Jew mentioned by Theodoret, in the beginning of his Dialogue againſt the Anomæans, was either an Ebionite or Nazarene; and ſhews the perpetual argumentative ſparring which took place between the Catholics and thoſe ſects. And this is ſtill further ſtrengthened from Proclus and Neſtorius calling one another *Jews*: but that by this epithet they did not intend to charge each other with being unbelieving Hebrews, is evident from their expreſſions. Proclus ſays, "Who therefore redeemed

* See Firſt Part, p. 246.

"us?

" us? not a *mere man*, you Jew." Neſtorius replies, " Don't boaſt, you Jew, you did not fix *God* upon the " croſs *." The reader will obſerve that Proclus, by taxing Neſtorius for being a Jew, ſhews what the opinion of the Jews was concerning Jeſus; namely, that he was only a *mere man*; which the Catholics aſſerted to be the opinion of Neſtorius, becauſe he denied *the union according to the ſubſiſtence.*

If I have ſhewn to the ſatisfaction of the reader, that the Ebionites and Nazarenes were called by the general appellation of *Jews*, it will reſolve one of the greateſt difficulties which, in my apprehenſion, occurs in the hiſtory of the lower empire; namely, the ſource of thoſe violent tumults and ſeditions, which affected various parts of the empire, but particularly Egypt and Alexandria. For the Hebrews, or Jews deſcended from Abraham, have ever, as far as our experience, or modern hiſtory, extends, been found obedient ſlaves: but thoſe Jews, on the contrary, are repreſented as being of a turbulent and ſeditious ſpirit; if ſuch terms properly apply to perſons contending for what they believe to be truth, but certainly for the rights of

* Marius Mercator, p. 305, c. 1, n.

human-

humanity: If then it be contended, that theſe Jews were of Hebrew extraction, it will follow, that their nature and diſpoſition have changed; for which ſome cauſe ſhould be aſſigned. But theſe turbulent Jews were too numerous, particularly at Alexandria, where 40,000 of them are ſaid to have periſhed in a ſingle tumult, to admit of their being of Hebrew deſcent.

Farther, we are informed by the ancients, that there was a Goſpel called *according to the Egyptians*, which by the learned is ſuppoſed to be loſt; but may it not be preſumed, that this Goſpel was no other than the Goſpel of Peter or of Mark, who is ſaid to have compoſed his Goſpel at Alexandria, and which might have obtained this appellation from its being the only one uſed by the Egyptian believers in Jeſus; as it was called the Goſpel *according to the Hebrews*, from the Hebrews Proſelytes only making uſe of it. Mark is alſo ſaid to have been the firſt biſhop of Alexandria*.

Theodoret, H. F. l. ii. c. 8, obſerves, "That Paul "Samoſatenſis fell into the hereſy of Artemon, "thinking in this manner to pay his court to Zeno-"bia, who was of *the ſame opinion* with the Jews."

* Lard. vol. V. p. 35, former edit. vol. x. p. 82.

Euſebius,

Euſebius, H.E. l. vi. c. 28. ſays, that Artemon believed, that Jeſus was a mere man. Theſe paſſages farther ſhew what was the opinion of the Jews concerning Jeſus in the third century of the Chriſtian æra: and moreover, that this female, who has done ſo much honour to her ſex, was a Jew. It is true, as Mr. Gibbon obſerves, that upon her being conquered and taken priſoner by Aurelian, ſhe did not, to avoid being exhibited as an ornament to ſet off his triumphal pomp, deprive herſelf of exiſtence, agreeably to the notions of Pagan honour. Her apology, if it needs one, is, that ſhe was a Jew; that is, a believer in the divine miſſion of Jeſus; for undoubtedly ſhe was not of the ſeed of Abraham.

Euſebius, l. v. c. 28, has given us an extract from an anonymous author, generally ſuppoſed to have been one Caius, who, in oppoſition to the Ebionites, (for they muſt have been of this ſect, as they are mentioned as rejecting the Law and the Prophets, though believers in Jeſus,) for aſſerting their antiquity, and maintaining that all the ancients, nay even the Apoſtles themſelves, taught the ſame things as they

themſelves

themſelves did, namely, that Jeſus was a mere man, acknowledges that what they ſaid was probable, (namely, that the faith profeſſed by them continued uncorrupted to Zephyrinus, biſhop of Rome) unleſs firſt that the divine Scriptures confuted them; and the writings of ſome of the brothers older than Victor, who was the predeceſſor of Zephyrinus, ſuch as Juſtin, and Miltiades, and Tatian, and Clemens, and Irenæus, and Milito, and many others, in all which Chriſt was declared and taught to be Man and God. Now every one of theſe writers being acquainted with the Sabellian hereſy, as may be ſeen by comparing the extracts from their writings in Lardner's works, or from other great improbabilities connected with their hiſtory, where their writings are ſo much deſtroyed as not to afford ſuch extracts, plainly ſhews that they were fictitious perſonages; and that the writings were in fact forged, partly to confute thoſe who maintained the Ebionæan opinion. And in perfect conſonance with ſuch baſe management, a miracle was trumped up to deter the vulgar from receiving the Ebionæan doctrine: for this anonymous writer obſerves,

" that

" that theſe Ebionites had corrupted with money one
" Natalis to profeſs their opinion, and who enjoyed
" the firſt rank amongſt them, which ſo attached him
" to them, that he reſiſted Jeſus Chriſt our Lord and
" God, who *oftentimes* appeared to him in his dreams,
" in order to bring him to himſelf, but to no
" purpoſe, till he received a good ſcourging from
" the bleſſed Angels during a *whole* night, the
" marks of which he exhibited in the morning; and
" after much prayers and lamentation, profeſſed him-
" ſelf of the true faith." Gentle reader, what do you think of this? If you imagine that ſuch conduct was the reſult of folly, you may aſſure yourſelf you err greatly. For has not ſimilar conduct in this very enlightened century, produced ſimilar effects? To ſpeak out, have not the Methodiſts, by forged miracles and lying relations (ſee the Arminian Magazine), made more converts to their way of thinking, than Locke, Clarke, Hartley, and Prieſtley? Neither are their converts the very loweſt claſs of mankind: I think on this head, their congregations conſiſt of decent people. I myſelf have been preſent, the only time I ever heard Mr. Weſley, when he related from

the pulpit two ſtories, equally probable, in my apprehenſion, to that of Natalis. However, I will do the Methodiſts this juſtice, that they keep cloſer to the doctrine of St. Paul, than any ſect of Chriſtians which I am acquainted with. Nor do I think that what Mr. Weſley related was a whit more improbable (but certainly far leſs ſinful if neither were true), than Paul's account of his being received into the third heaven. The Ebionites, as is well known, held Paul to be a *bad* man. Neither ſhould it appear ſurpriſing to poſterity, that Methodiſm had eſtabliſhed itſelf upon the ruins of all the other Chriſtian ſects. But printing, and [the *tendency* of modern governments towards reſtoring mankind to their juſt rights, will no doubt prevent this effect from ever taking place. But had the European governments an oppoſite tendency, printing would facilitate the work. Far different indeed, [according to Caius, were the literary recreations of that ſect, which I have preſumed to name Ebionites. Euclid, and Ariſtotle, and Theophraſtus, and Galen, were their favourite authors.

The *Samaritans* I hold to have been only another appellation for the Nazarenes or Ebionites. Epi-

phanius

phanius ſays, *that they worſhipped one God, and rejected the prophets of the Old Teſtament*, which is what he affirms of the Ebionites.

Farther we are informed, that *Holy* Sabbas was deputed from Jeruſalem to Juſtinian, to draw down the reſentment of that Emperor upon the Samaritans *. This evinces the extreme hatred which took place between theſe two ſects; the conſequence perhaps of their theological controverſies, and ſeems to point them out as being the ſame with the Jews; and of courſe, that Samaritan was only another name for Ebionite or Nazarene. Epiphanius moreover informs us †, "that whereas all other ſects, ſuch as the Marcio-"nites, Manicheans, &c. though they were no Chriſ-"tians at all, yet eſteemed, in an honourable light, "the appellation of *Chriſtians*; but of theſe Naza-"renes of whom I am now ſpeaking," ſays he, "they "have laid aſide the name of Jeſus, nor do *they call* "*themſelves* Jeſſæans, nor Jews, nor *Chriſtians*, but "*Nazarenes*; though they are *entirely* Jews, and no "other. And that they held one God, and that

* Auctarium Thdrt. p. 156, note. † Hær. xxix. ſ. 6, 7.

"Jeſus Chriſt was his Son." From hence it follows, that if all theſe ſects were one, with different appellations, they diſavowed the appellation of Chriſtians. For what reaſon therefore ſhould they be denominated Chriſtians by the Moderns? Epiphanius ſays *, that Elxai is claimed by *four* ſects, as the author of their deluſions, viz. the *Ebionæans* and *later Nazarenes*; by the *Oſſens*, as well thoſe who preceded, as thoſe who followed after him; and by the Naſaræans, whom he elſewhere calls *lawleſs* for rejecting the law of Moſes as delivered in the Pentateuch: and not for rejecting the *new* law or New Teſtament as I have ſuppoſed in the Firſt Part of theſe Strictures. Now when four ſects claimed him, it may be reaſonably inferred, that they did not *eſſentially* differ. Elxai beſides made uſe of the Goſpel of Matthew only, according to Epiphanius, which he alſo called the Goſpel *according to the Hebrews*.

Nicolaitans, independently of the antiquity of this ſect, which acknowledges for its founder Nicolas, one of the firſt ſeven deacons of the church of Jeruſalem;

* Hær. xix. 5.

the

the moſt ſhameful ſenſual exceſſes having been imputed to them, is, in my opinion, ſufficient to prove that they merited the title of Ebionæans.

Maſſalians, or Enthuſiaſts; theſe are repreſented by Epiphanius and Theodoret, in very odious colours: however, the latter admits, that they violently proteſted againſt the truth of what was charged againſt them. Epiphanius alſo ſays, that concerning their filthineſs and crimes, he could not ſay any thing certain. So that perhaps they were only groundleſs reports: the heavieſt charge is, that of having their wives in common: though this is afterwards reduced to their having two or three wives at the ſame time in one houſe; and not like the Patriarchs who kept them in ſeparate dwellings. He further obſerves, that they were *neither Jews nor Chriſtians*, that they were of Gentile extraction, and only worſhipped one God, whom they called the *Almighty*: alſo, that their places for worſhip were called oratories, and were conſtructed in *different* forms, thinking it a matter of little importance in what form they were built, which was by no means indifferent to the Catholics. He has alſo obſerved, that *Lupicinus*, an

Imperial

Imperial officer, had put ſome of them to death while at their devotions, and that the ſurvivors were ſo fooliſh as to think, that they, who were idolaters, could have been martyrs. What his notion of idolatry was I will not affirm, but it is clear, that the holy Father thought that the worſhippers of *one* Almighty Being might be juſtly called idolaters. He alſo informs us, that they had no head, or eccleſiaſtical polity, and of courſe were only a rope of ſand. He admits, however, that the Ebionites had preſbyters and heads of *ſyna-gogues*, for ſo their congregations were called; a far-ther argument that they were diſtinguiſhed by the appellation of Jews. The Meſſalians were accuſtomed to ſay, "He that does not work, let him not eat," 2 Theſſ. iii. 10. Hence it may be infefred, that they were induſtrious, and ſuch are ſeldom vicious. How-ever, in this obſervation, it ſeems from Epiphanius's long defence, that they had an eye to the Monks, and perhaps to the ſuperior clergy: yet, in his reply, I don't find, that the Holy Father hints at all at the divine right of the clergy to tythes. The right to them at this time was unknown. Epiphanius farther obſerves of the Maſſalians, that they ſhaved

their

their faces, and let their hair grow long: whereas they ſhould have done the very contrary in both reſpects; in proof of which, the apoſtolical conſtitutions are cited, which I hope Dr. Knowles will pay proper reſpect to in future. [See Firſt Part, p. 25.] He alſo obſerves, that thoſe perſons, who abſtained from motives of purity from the commerce of women, and the enjoyments of ſenſe, were to them objects of contempt: this he makes the characteriſtic of the Ebionæan ſects. V. p. 195. and, in my apprehenſion, proves that the Maſſalians were only another appellation for Ebionites. The Ebionites were ſingularly diſtinguiſhed for perſonal cleanlineſs.

I ſhall add a few miſcellaneous remarks upon thoſe believers who were not dignified by the appellation of Chriſtians.

The Emperor Julian, in his letter to Arſacius*, ſays, "That it would be ſhameful that there ſhould "be no beggars among the Jews; and that the im-"pious Galilæans [Chriſtians] ſhould maintain be-"ſides their own, our poor: and that our poor ſhould "ſeem to be forſaken by ourſelves." Here the Jews

* Soz. l. v. c. 16.

and

and Galilæans are contradiſtinguiſhed. Sozomen, l. v. c. 22. obſerves, " that Julian was kind to the " *Jews*, who were *literal* expounders, not like the " *Chriſtians* [mind, Reader, that theſe are the words " of a *Chriſtian* writer] and the wiſeſt of the *Hebrews* " themſelves." Here the Jews are diſtinguiſhed from the Chriſtians and Hebrews, and were obviouſly believers. This paſſage alſo ſhews, who thoſe Hebrews were from among whom no proſelyte was made, according to the ſame Sozomen, to the belief of the God-Word. It alſo ſhows that Julian was kind to the *true* diſciples, in my apprehenſion, of Jeſus: and when he apoſtatiſed from Chriſtianity, that he did not apoſtatiſe from the truth. It is true, that Sozomen mentions in this chapter the order of Julian for rebuilding the temple of Jeruſalem, and the miracle which prevented its ſucceeding: but as the miracle has been long given up, except by irrational theologians; if ſtill inſiſted upon, it muſt be admitted, that it was given to favour Jews, not the deſcendants of Abraham, but of thoſe Gentiles and Hebrews who profeſſed the Ebionite opinion. Perhaps, ſuch an order

in

in favour of this ſect will now no longer be contended for.

Sozomen obſerves, l. iii. c. 17. " that the ſons of " Conſtantine had made a law that no Jew ſhould " be permitted to purchaſe a ſlave." This law was made to favour Chriſtians, who it ſeems, as well as the Jews, dealt in human fleſh. Theſe Jews, I preſume, were Ebionites. He alſo obſerves, that if the ſlave was circumciſed, that, in this caſe, death and crucifixion were to be the puniſhment. This, perhaps, was intended againſt thoſe of them that were of Hebrew extraction, and who might poſſibly have been, from Chriſtian oppreſſion, inſtigated to ſuch acts, to ſhew their contempt of Paul the Apoſtle, whom they called an apoſtate, and who particularly exerted himſelf in preaching and writing againſt the Jewiſh ceremonial law. Perhaps it may be obſerved, that notwithſtanding the ſtrong probability that all theſe appellations were only different names of the ſame ſect, who were the genuine followers of Jeſus; yet that it is not poſſible to conceive that they were well founded in rejecting ſo many books of the Old and New Teſtament, as it appears from unqueſtionable evidence

that they did; ſeeing that theſe books, if forgeries, could never have eſtabliſhed their credit among Chriſtians, though theſe were even allowed to be corrupters of the religion of Jeſus. To this I ſhall reply, firſt, that were thoſe books genuine, I mean thoſe of the New Teſtament, the manners and cuſtoms, which prevailed in Judea, and which the late Mr. Harmer, in his Obſervations on Scripture, has ſhewn to have always prevailed there, and to ſtill prevail there, would be obſerved in theſe writings. To me no ſtronger proof appears of the ſpurioufneſs of any writing than when the manners and cuſtoms of the people, among whom the tranſactions are recorded to have paſſed, are not preſerved, but others quite foreign to them; which is the caſe with every book of the Tew Teſtament, except the Goſpel of Mark: and that, when any thing diſcordant to the manners and cuſtoms of the Jews is mentioned in this Goſpel, ſuch paſſage ſhall fairly appear from my Harmony of the Goſpels to have been transferred from one of the other Goſpels, as Jerome allows in ſome inſtances to have been done into Mark's Goſpel. When this ſhall appear I would wiſh to know how it hath happened, that, when Greek and

Roman

Roman manners are aſcribed to the Jews in the other Goſpels, this ſhould be free of them. Can it be fairly aſcribed to any other cauſe than that the compoſer of this Goſpel was well acquainted with the local circumſtances attending the tranſactions, whether it were Peter himſelf, or that he made uſe of Mark as an amanuenſis. It is obſerved by Dr. Lardner, that the writer of this Goſpel appears, in many inſtances, to have been an eye-witneſs of what he mentions, from the language he makes uſe of; and this can ſcarcely be diſputed. But in the Goſpels of Matthew and John the Evangeliſts expreſs themſelves frequently in ſuch a manner, that it is impoſſible to aſſign a decent reaſon for ſuch a mode of expreſſion being made uſe of by *Hebrews* who were eye-witneſſes. But, laying aſide theſe preſumptive arguments in favour of the ſpuriouſneſs of theſe Goſpels, if preſumptive they can be juſtly called, I will lay before the reader the *great unanimity* which took place among the Chriſtians themſelves concerning their ſacred books; for it is well known, that many will yield to authority, who would reſiſt arguments founded upon the principles of common ſenſe.

The Gnoſtics, it is allowed, acknowledged only thoſe parts of ſcripture, whether of the Old or New Teſtament, which, in their opinion, did honour to the Deity, rejecting the remainder. The epiſtle of Ptolemy to his ſiſter, preſerved by Epiphanius, and what Dr. Lardner has introduced, in his article of the Manichees, from Fauſtus, fully eſtabliſh what I here advance. But perhaps it will be ſaid, that though the Gnoſtics were a learned ſect, and called themſelves Chriſtians, yet their refinements were ſo abſurd, that they were by no means entitled to the appellation. Be it ſo: though I own that this letter of Ptolemy's ſtrikes me as a very ſenſible production, and which would do no diſcredit to a modern unbeliever.

What are we to think then of the Humaniſts? Were they not Chriſtians? Their title to this appellation has never been diſputed. The learned Garnerius obſerves, that the doctrines of an individual are imputable to the ſchool from whence he iſſued. If this be allowed, the tenets of a Humaniſt are imputable to thoſe Humaniſts who preceded as well as to thoſe who followed him. Thus it is ſaid, and for

this

this reaſon, by the ancients, that Marcellus was the maſter of Photinus; that Paul of Samoſate was the maſter of Marcellus, which could ſcarcely in fact have happened, ſeeing that Paul had been depoſed fifty or ſixty years before Marcellus had been known. But he was called his maſter, as teaching that Jeſus Chriſt was a mere man, as Marcellus alſo did. In like manner Diodorus of Tarſus is called the maſter of Theodore of Mopſueſtua, and Theodore of Neſtorius, for denying, contrary to the Catholic doctrine, *the union according to the Subſiſtence*; and that Jeſus of courſe was only a mere man. But it will be ſaid perhaps, admit that all theſe taught, according to the Catholics, that Jeſus was only a man; yet what has this to ſay in regard of the books of our ſacred canon.

Theodore of Mopſueſtua is handed down to us by the ancients as one of the moſt learned men of his time. Lardner ſpeaks very highly of him. He is a favourite alſo with the modern Humaniſts. The reader, therefore, muſt be curious to know what opinion this learned writer entertained of our ſacred books. Garnerius informs us from Leontius, " that Theodore " had compoſed many expoſitions againſt the ſacred

" text

" text of *both* the Old and New Teſtament, but more " virulently againſt the Epiſtles of Paul, and the " *three* Goſpels of Mathew, Luke, and John *." It may be fairly inferred from this paſſage, that he had nothing to object againſt Mark's Goſpel; otherwiſe it is hard to account for its being *twice* omitted, I may ſay, in the ſame paſſage: for it ſays, that he wrote againſt *three* of the Goſpels, which are immediately *after* paticularized. In the preceding page Garnerius alſo informs us, " that of the ſacred canonical books " he deſpiſed Job, as being a heathen fable; the " books of Chronicles and Eſdras, as empty rhapſo- " dies; the Song of Solomon as a love ſong; the " *Canonical Epiſtles* † he deſpiſed as forgeries; and, " like the *Jews*, referred the Pſalms to Zorobabel and " Ezechias; and that three only related to the Lord ‡."

* Jam vero Leontius excerpta de libris Theodori, contra incarnationem, ut loquitur, prolaturus, de aliis operibus præfatur, aitque, ab eo perverſe plures in ſacram utriuſque Teſtamenti ſcripturam expoſitiones compoſitas, ſed virulentius in epiſtolas Pauli, et evangelia tria Mathæi, Johannis, & Lucæ. Marius Mercator, p. 321. c. 1.

† The Epiſtle of James; the Firſt and Second of Peter; the Firſt, Second, and Third of John; and the Epiſtle of Jude.

‡ Rejecit ille ſacrorum librorum ex canone Jobum, velut ethnicum fabulam; libros paralipomenon et Eſdram, tanquam inanes rhapſodias; Canticum

It is needleſs to make comments: they are obvious to every reader.

But that there were good grounds for holding in ſo low eſtimation many of our ſacred books, is evident from St. Auguſtine, the contemporary of Theodore, who is diſtinguiſhed among the Fathers for his good ſenſe, and who no on will deny to have been truly Catholic; who ſays, "But I would not believe the "Goſpel, unleſs *the authority* of the Catholic church "induced me thereto." Ego vero evangelio non crederem, niſi me Catholicæ eccleſiæ commoneret auctoritas †. Now the Proteſtants having diſcarded the authority of the Church, it follows, that were they endowed with Auguſtine's good ſenſe, they ſhould not believe in the Goſpel neither.

Farther, Origen, who preceded Auguſtine nearly two centuries, and who is eſteemed the moſt learned of the Fathers, ſays, ſpeaking of the canonical and uncanonical Goſpels, "But in all theſe things we"

Canticum Salomonis, uti carmen amatorium; epiſtolas canonicas, velut ſuppoſitas apoſtolis deſpexit; Pſalmos Judiace ad Zorobabilem et Ezechiam retulit, tribus tantum ad Dominum rejectis. M. Merc. p. 220. c. 2.

* Contr. Ep. Fundam. tom. i. p. 446. Lardn. vol. v. p. 118, former ed. vol. x. p. 290.

[meaning

[meaning himſelf] "approve of nothing elſe but what "*the Church* [approves of]; that is, four Goſpels "ſhould be only received †." Origen's language ſo nearly reſembles Auguſtine's, that it may be preſumed that Auguſtine had Origen in his eye in what he ſays; and both paſſages ſhew, that there was no better authority, than that of the Catholic church, for receiving any of the books of the New Teſtament, ſave the Goſpel of Mark; which was alſo received by the Catholics, though, according to Jerome, greatly interpolated by the Chriſtians.

As it has appeared from ſeveral paſſages cited from the Fathers in theſe ſheets that the Jews and Ebionites, whom I truſt to have ſhewn to have been the true followers of Jeſus, beſides rejecting the New Teſtament, except the Goſpel of Mark, and all the prophets, and ſome of the other books of the Old Teſtament, acknowledged only partially even the Pentateuch; I ſhall not ſcruple here then to give my opi-

† Sed in his omnibus nihil aliud probamus, niſi quod eccleſia, id eſt, quatuor tantum Evangelia recipienda. In proœmium Lucæ, Homilia prima. Origenis op. ed. a Genebrardo. Pariſiis, 1619. See alſo Chelſum's Remarks, p. 38.

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nion concerning this portion of the Old Teſtament; premiſing, however, that I have not made it the particular object of my ſtudies.

Firſt, I hold every thing mentioned in Geneſis prior to the flood to be utterly fabulous, and that the firſt ray of true hiſtory begins with the call of Abraham; but I am far from crediting every thing which is mentioned of that patriarch, particularly what is related of his wife Sarah and the King of Egypt.

Secondly, That the Iſraelites reſided in Egypt a conſiderable ſpace, I believe, cannot be diſputed; and alſo that, upon quitting the country, they took poſſeſſion, and nearly expelled or extirpated the original inhabitants, of the land of Canaan; but that *all* thoſe miracles were performed in Egypt before Pharoah, would allow them to depart, I think highly incredible; the ſlaying the firſt-born was enough for that purpoſe [in all conſcience, which I am inclined to give credit to rather than to any of the others, as the Jewiſh paſſover was inſtituted in memorial of the mercy of God ſhewn to the Iſraelites upon that occaſion. But that the Iſraelites eſcaped out of

Egypt over the almoſt impaſſable mountains to the Eaſt of the Red Sea, and through the midſt of that ſea, is utterly abſurd to imagine, even though they were not incumbered with their women, children, and cattle; nothing but a miracle could have effected it, even over the mountains only: moreover, the cattle in the paſſage muſt be ſuſtained by another miracle. Add to all this that more miracles would be requiſite to get Pharoah and his chariots over the mountains, &c. Farther, admitting that Pharoah himſelf had his heart ſo much hardened as to be inſenſible of the Divine interpoſitions in favour of the Iſraelites, it would be equally neceſſary that the hearts of his ſoldiers ſhould be equally hardened to induce them to enter into the ſpace vacated by the ſea, which on either ſide of them appeared as a wall ready to overwhelm them. I will venture to affirm that no deſpot, or general, had ever an army ſo obedient and ſubmiſſive to his command as to obey or follow him in ſo mad an expedition. But I ſhall purſue this theme no farther but proceed with additional matter, having at firſt intended to end this diſquiſition at this place.

WHILST

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WHILST theſe ſheets were printing off * I have been chiefly engaged in peruſing the writings of Tertullian and of Origen againſt Celſus, and alſo of the apoſtolical and primitive Fathers; that is, of thoſe Fathers who are *ſaid* to have preceded Origen. During the peruſal ſo many things ſtruck me, that I have thought it neceſſary to continue my obſervations, which will appear, in ſeveral reſpects, to be more fitly mentioned in a work of this nature than in the preliminary diſſertation which will be prefixed to the Harmony of the Goſpels, which publication I intend ſhall be of a more popular nature than thoſe controverſial pages, which ordinary readers will be deterred from the peruſal of by the number of quotations in the dead languages that ſo frequently diſfigure them. However, ſhould my ſyſtem be ultimately approved of by the learned and ingenuous, I truſt that even this work will be an object of rational enquiry among ſoberly diſpoſed and unbigotted people, notwithſtanding the diſagreeable and forbidding aſpect it preſents of a controverſial tract.

* Since the beginning of laſt November.

Independently of the apparent boldneſs of ſome of the ſentiments which will occur in what follows, and which certainly, unleſs perfectly well grounded, ſhould not raſhly be ſubmitted to the public eye, it will appear a duty incumbent on me to enter into farther particulars from my having frequently aſſerted or intimated in this work the ſpuriouſneſs of the writings aſcribed to thoſe Fathers, who are commonly called Apoſtolical and Primitive; and that they are of a later age than what is generally ſuppoſed by the learned: and that, as ſpurious writings, they do not merit the great ſtreſs laid upon them by modern controverſial Chriſtian writers of every ſect; which, were they the writings of thoſe perſons whoſe names they bear, conſidering the imputed holineſs of their characters, their nearneſs of time to the founder of our holy religion, there could remain no reaſonable doubt but that, from the ſuperior opportunities they muſt have had of arriving at the truth upon every ſubject of controverſy which after their time ſprung up among Chriſtians, what they affirmed upon the matter in debate, provided that they at all touched upon it, ought to have been deemed concluſive. To affirm the

contrary

contrary, methinks, is tantamount to affirming that the apoſtles, their choſen diſciples, and their ſucceſſors, did not underſtand what they themſelves were taught, and of courſe *are* not to be depended on; or that they ſpoke without authority, which cannot be at all ſuppoſed in pious characters; as the ſubject chiefly in debate concerned the nature and being of the Son, or God-Word, and the worſhip or reſpect which ſhould be paid to him. If they could be miſtaken upon ſuch important ſubjects, and which lay entirely within the purview of their commiſſion, I ſee no reaſon why they ſhould be conſidered as perſons who can be depended on in what they advance upon any ſubject. Perhaps it may be imagined, that they have not alluded to or given their ſentiments upon the controverted ſubjects, and that That is the reaſon of the ſilence of the parties engaged concerning what they had ſaid, and that this ſilence by no means infers, but that what they had advanced upon other topics, was received with due reſpect by the bulk of Chriſtians. Though this notion appears very natural and reaſonable; yet it is ſo far from being founded in fact, that there is not a ſingle heretical opinion of any conſequence which was advanced for

two, I may ſay almoſt *three* centuries after Chriſt, but what is evidently alluded to by them. Nevertheleſs, we do not find that the teſtimonies of theſe Fathers is ever adduced by the Catholics againſt the Heretics, as ſubverſive of their peculiar notions, which ſhould naturally be of ſuch moment, no more than if they had never exiſted; which *prima facie*, I apprehend, will be deemed a ſtrong argument againſt their ever having had an exiſtence; unleſs we ſhould impute the moſt unaccountable oſcitancy to the orthodox controverſialiſts, which they by no means merit to be charged with; as, in order to ſupport orthodoxy, there are no ſort of arguments to which they do not recur; ſome of them utterly inadmiſſible, but ſome evincing an acuteneſs which ſhews the writer to be a perſon of uncommon capability. I ſcruple not to aſſert, that greater ability has been exhibited in ſupport of Chriſtianity, without including the moderns, than has been done upon all the other ſubjects of human inveſtigation ſince the creation of the world.

Though I think that this would be the natural inference of unprejudiced or unbigotted perſons of common ſenſe; yet ſtill having to do with Chriſtians, not

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one in a hundred of whom, be their ſect what it may, whether rigid Popery or pure Unitarianiſm, or any medium between them, I believe to be unprejudiced, or capable of only paying merited attention to arguments propoſed to them when in oppoſition to their former belief. This prejudice, which certainly exiſts upon every ſubject of human inveſtigation, yet ſtill, in ſubjects of religious ſpeculation, preſents itſelf with ſo determined and ſuch a pre-diſpoſed an inclination not to yield aſſent to almoſt, if I ſhould not rather ſay entirely concluſive arguments, as not to render the ſituation of the writer who attempts to offer any thing in oppoſition to it truly pitiable. This is ſtill farther increaſed in my ſituation, becauſe, having acknowledged and profeſſing that Jeſus was an honeſt man, and of courſe no impoſtor, it follows, that thoſe perſons whom I can only ſay to be generally endowed with common ſenſe, I mean the free-thinkers or unbelievers of the age, at leaſt as far as my converſe among mankind enables me to judge, and who are indiſputably a large portion of readers, will only deem the attempt to reconcile the doctrine and miſſion of Jeſus with the dictates of common ſenſe ſuch an ab-

ſurd notion as unworthy the leaſt attention, and evincing that the propounder of it is fit for Bedlam. So that my only hope of attracting the attention of theſe, depends upon my firſt convincing Chriſtians, whom I deem to be the moſt prejudiced of men: for ſhould unbelievers find that Chriſtians laid aſide their religious prejudices, and had adopted a new ſyſtem, a ſyſtem however which is old as Jeſus, and which no learned Chriſtian can deny to be *ſo*, they may perhaps be induced fairly to examine writings which could have cauſed ſo unexpected a change. But to the apparent paradox of my ſentiment, which will render many inattentive to it, is ſuperadded the length of the work in which the ſubject is diſcuſſed: a work beſides ſo much diſfigured with quotations in the dead languages, which will make many apprehend the ſubject to be above their comprehenſion, which I truſt will be found not to be the caſe by any of my readers: at leaſt it has been my object, by the utmoſt ſimplicity of language, to prevent it. However, notwithſtanding the deſperateneſs of my ſituation, in the well-founded hope that *truth in the end muſt always prevail*, I perſeveres. Not being ambitious of making general impota-

tions

tations upon bodies of men, without in ſome meaſure ſubſtantiating them, I apprehend, that the controverſies between the Popiſh and Catholic with the Proteſtant writers for almoſt three centuries—of both with their diſſenting and Unitarian brethren—and of all ſects of Chriſtians againſt the Freethinkers, without any of the parties ſcarcely yielding even an iota to the other, evinces Chriſtian bigotry, independently of the ancient controverſies. I ſhall now proceed to my proper ſubject, beginning with the Apoſtolic Fathers, and making uſe of Le Clerc's admirable edition of 1724.

Before I proceed farther, I muſt entreat the reader to retain firmly in mind that, according to Tertullian *, the Marcionite hereſy, or the opinion of thoſe who held that Chriſt had only a *ſeeming* body, ſprung up in the reign of Antoninus Pius, and according to the Marcionites themſelves, in the *hundred and fifteenth* year after the Crucifixion; that is, in the hundred and forty-third year of our æra, as elſewhere I ſhall ſhew; or the ſeventh year of the Emperor Antoninus Pius, who aſcended the Imperial throne, A. D. 137.—

* Ad. Marc. l. i. c. 19.

And secondly, that the Gnostic heresy did *not* spring up in the Apostolic age; for this fact we have the most express testimonies of Cyprian Bishop of Carthage, and Firmilian Bishop of Cæsarea, the metropolis of Cappadocia *, who, according to Dr. Lardner, was as sensible a bishop as any of his time, who agree in thinking that no one could be so foolish as to imagine it.

The first of the apostolical Fathers who presents himself to our consideration, is Barnabas the Apostle, so called by Clemens Alexandrinus, a learned writer, who *is said* to have flourished about the year 200 of our æra.

In the Philocalia, a work containing Extracts out of Origen's writings, made by Gregory Nazianzen and Basil the Great †, Barnabas is mentioned as having written a *Catholic Epistle*. This epistle, however, is pronounced by Eusebius to be spurious. But even from its being called a *Catholic* epistle, in a work extracted from Origen, must be admitted as a proof, that it was made use of, or read in the assemblies or churches of the primitive Christians. For though Eusebius has

* See First Part, Disq. p. 39. † Lardner, vol. ii. p. 455.

pronounced

pronounced it to be ſpurious, yet he acknowledges that it was among thoſe writings contained in the New Teſtament*. Moreover it is mentioned, together with the book inſcribed Hermas, or the Shepherd; which though alſo pronounced by him to be ſpurious, yet he elſewhere admits† to have been read in Chriſtian aſſemblies, as being a very uſeful book, eſpecially for the *young* Catechumens, in which I doubt not the reader will perfectly coincide when I ſhall briefly ſtate what it contains.

This Epiſtle of Barnabas now only exiſts in a mutilated Greek copy, and in an old Latin verſion. This is generally admitted by the learned to be conſiderably interpolated, as containing more than the original Greek copy. To diſcover theſe interpolations is not my buſineſs; my taſk being only to prove that the ſmaller Epiſtle, by ſome eſteemed genuine, was not written in the firſt century, and of courſe that it does not belong to Barnabas, who is univerſally allowed to have lived in this century. The paſſage I fix on to ſhew this is as follows:

* H. E. l. iii. c. 25. καινης διαθηκης. † Ib. c. 3.

"For unleſs he [Jeſus] came *in the fleſh*, how "could we who ſaw him have been ſaved*?" This paſſage evidently alludes to the Docete hereſy.

As this Epiſtle was among thoſe writings recited in the aſſemblies of the faithful, but which Biſhop Horſley affirms to be "*extravagant and nonſenſical in many* "*parts*," leſt the Chriſtian reader might infer that his Lordſhip was not well founded in his notion, or, if he was, that the primitive Chriſtians were only a ſet of poor, canting, deluded, and deluding wretches, capable only of reliſhing incomprehenſible nonſenſe, like ſome of the ſects of the godly in our times, the true antitypes of the primitive Chriſtians, I ſhall adduce a few paſſages from this apoſtle to prove it.

Barnabas, who was the companion of St. Paul, beſides quoting paſſages as from ſcripture which are not *now* to be found there, informs us, that when *Moſes was prompted by the Spirit* to ſtretch forth his arms while the Iſraelites were fighting againſt Amalek, it was to ſhew his being a type of the Croſs of Chriſt†; alſo that the

* Ει γαρ μη ηλθεν εν σαρκι, πως αν εσωθημεν ανθρωποι, Εδεποιλες ανλον. S. 5. See alſo S. 12.

† See Exod. c. xvii.

brazen

brazen ſerpent, and Iſaiah, ch. lxv. ver. 2. were in like manner typical of the Croſs of Chriſt.

Did not Proteſtants abſurdly imagine, that worſhipping the Croſs was a corruption of Chriſtianity, introduced by the Roman church, I would not be at the trouble of adducing theſe paſſages. But they who, with Biſhop Horſley, &c. will affirm that this Epiſtle is of the firſt century, ſhould admit that the reſpect, to ſpeak in the mildeſt terms, due to the Croſs, is almoſt contemporary with Chriſtianity itſelf. Moreover it is not to be imagined that this fancy is peculiar to the doating Barabbas: no, it is to be found in Juſtin Martyr, the holy Martyr as his Lordſhip calls him, and alſo in Tertullian.

There is one conceit, however, of this holy *Apoſtle* to which his Lordſhip alludes, which, in order to give the reader a clearer inſight into his character, I ſhall lay before him; namely, *that the three hundred and eighteen perſons belonging to the houſehold of Abraham, whom he circumciſed, were typical of our Lord and Saviour: for that the two firſt letters,* I *and* n, *of the name Jeſus were expreſſive of the number eighteen; and*

that

that T, *which in Greek reſembles a Croſs, was of the value of three hundred.* Perhaps when Horace ſays,

Credat Judæus Apella,
Non ego—

he alludes to ſuch dreamers. But be this as it may, the conceit could only be of any value in the Hebrew language; this Epiſtle being addreſſed to the *Hebrew Chriſtians* according to his Lordſhip. But in this reſpect it miſerably fails, if I am to credit the learned Menard, who ſays that the letter T in Hebrew has the value of four hundred and not three hundred *. So I think his Lordſhip may admit with others, that this Epiſtle was written to Gentile Chriſtians. But be it written to whomſoever it may, we find the ſame conceit in the learned Juſtin Martyr.

I proceed to Hermas. This work is mentiond by Irenæus frequently—by Tertullian, and by Origen, who with others eſteemed it a very uſeful book, and even divinely inſpired †. I will not diſpute this character of the work with the pious preſbyter; though Dr. Prieſtley affirms, that it is a *fooliſh* work, and

* Patres. Ap. vol. i. p. 30. n. 36.

† Lib. x. explanationum in epiſtolam ad Romanos ad capitis 16 verſum 14.

for

for this reaſon perhaps places the writer of it, whom the antients affirm to have flouriſhed in the firſt century of Chriſtianity and to have been alſo the companion of St. Paul, in the *ſecond* century; deeming it utterly improbable that the diſciple of that apoſtle, whom he himſelf had proved to have argued *erroneouſly*, could have had a diſciple who ſhould argue in a *like* inconcluſive manner with his maſter. This is an inſtance of modern conſiſtency! The ingenious Doctor might alſo have recollected, that the bleſſed Papias, Biſhop of Hierapolis, the diſciple of St. John, is admitted on all hands to have been little better than a dotard. The truth is, that the apoſtles do not appear to have been inſpired by the Holy Spirit in the choice of their ſucceſſors.

The book entitled Hermas conſiſts of four viſions, which are explained to him by the Church, who appears under the form of an old woman—Alſo of twelve commands, given to him by the Shepherd under whoſe tutelage he had been placed. The fourth of theſe commands enjoins Chriſtians to take back an adulterous wife, if ſhe repents. The ſixth commands Chriſtians to believe in two Genii, who ever accompany mankind

kind, one good and the other evil—And of ten reſemblances, or leſſons drawn from natural objects or viſions, ſtrongly perſuaſive to martyrdom. The ninth is particularly curious, for in it we are told, that the young catechumen, Hermas, is carried by his Mentor, the Shepherd, to a high mountain in Arcadia, where among other pleaſing objects preſented to his view, are a number of beautiful virgins, four of whom excelled the others. They are deſcribed to be in Greek attire—beautiful—graceful—full of life and ſpirits *.

After having viſited theſe pleaſing ſcenes two or three times with his Mentor, he is at length left alone with theſe beautiful damſels, which diſtreſſed him very much, and which he in vain reſiſted.

He was not long in this agreeable ſociety, when the eldeſt of theſe maidens embracing, kiſſed him: which good example the others followed. Our prudent catechumen was uneaſy at his dangerous ſituation; but agreed to ſtay till evening, in expectation that his Mentor would return. However, when night began to draw her ſable curtains, and he propoſing to de-

* Decoræ, delicatæ, hilares, atque promptæ.

part,

part, theſe ſweet and kind creatures inſiſted upon his paſſing the night with them, which from neceſſity, it not being in his power to depart, he was obliged to comply with. Theſe damſels accordingly ſpread their garments on the ground for a couch, and placed in the midſt of them our bluſhing Catechumen. Immediately they all ſet to pray, and thus paſſed the night to the extreme ſatisfaction of Hermas.—Riſum teneatis.

Mind, reader, that the ſhepherd, our Catechumen's Mentor, was appointed to this office by the Church: ſhe was an indulgent mother you will ſay. Origen might well ſay that this book was very uſeful for young Catechumens, which appears alſo to have been the opinion of the great Athanaſius *. Perhaps ſuch writings were the cauſe of this pious preſbyter's misfortune. I ſuſpect that works of the ſame ſort would make our young fellows pay ſomewhat more attention to Chriſtianity than they ſeem likely ever to do as matters are now managed. Farther, we are alſo informed by the Fathers, that martyrs, immediately upon the ſeparation of the ſoul and body, enjoyed the beatifick viſion. Now who, that was

* Ep. firſt, Tom. ii. ſecond Edition, Paris, pag. 39, 40.

thoroughly perſuaded of the truth of theſe things, the enjoying the beatifick viſion and the ſociety of pretty girls, would not wiſh to die martyrs? for martyrs only, as we are alſo informed by the Chriſtian Fathers, though they have omitted to tell upon what authority, were entitled immediately after death to theſe privileges. Perhaps this notion firſt gave riſe to Chriſtians addreſſing dead men: for being in the ſight of God, they might be ſuppoſed to have a good opportunity for interceding with the Deity for their ſinful brethren here on earth.

I have heard or read of one chief cauſe of the quick progreſs of Mahometaniſm, namely, the aſſuring his followers that true Moſlems, or believers, would be attended by pretty black-eyed girls in ſhady bowers. I hope he did not copy this from Chriſtian writings: however I do not recollect that he alſo promiſed the beatifick viſion.

In the *Shepherd** the Holy Spirit is called the *Son of God*, and Jeſus is made the ſervant of God, and is adopted by God as another Son.

This work appears to me to be the oldeſt of any in

* Line iii. Sect. 5.

this

this collection of the truly learned Cotelerius: not only for the juſt mentioned ſingular notion, but alſo becauſe I perceive no alluſions in it, notwithſtanding its length, to the Docete hereſy.

I proceed next to the Epiſtle of Clemens Romanus, ſaid to be the third biſhop of Rome by the Greek Fathers; but by the Latin Fathers, who, conſidering that he was a biſhop of Rome, ſhould be ſuppoſed to be the beſt authority in this caſe, affirmed to have immediately ſucceeded Peter in the See of Rome. A Sceptic might infer from this diſagreement among Chriſtian writers, who are allowed to have flouriſhed within leſs than a century after this Clement, that no ſuch perſon exiſted: ſeeing that the ſtate of learning at that time, ſo univerſally diffuſed throughout the Roman world, would, by writings of one ſort or other, have preſerved the true ſucceſſion of the firſt Roman Pontiffs. Farther, as the ſubject of the firſt Epiſtle of Clement had chiefly in view the feuds conſequent upon a vacancy in the See of Corinth, the memory of theſe could not have been ſo entirely obliterated in leſs than a century, as to cauſe a difference in the date of this Epiſtle of thirty years. For between the modern

Theologians, who ſcruple not univerſally, I apprehend, to aſcribe this Epiſtle to Clement, there is this difference in their reſpective dates of it: ſome ſuppoſing it to have been written in the reign of Nero; others towards the cloſe of Domitian's. If we give credit to the Latin Fathers, and to the expreſs teſtimony of Tertullian, that Clement was the ſucceſſor of Peter in the See of Rome, the ſpuriouſneſs of this Epiſtle is at once evinced, unleſs we allow an earlier date to Chriſtianity than is univerſally ſuppoſed. For on the forty-fourth ſection, Clement ſays, "wherefore we "cannot think that thoſe may be juſtly thrown out of the miniſtry who were either appointed by the "[Apoſtles], or *afterwards choſen* by other eminent "men with the conſent of the whole church." And "have been for a *long time* commended by all." Again he calls the church of Corinth "*an ancient church.*" Surely ſuch phraſeology will not apply to a church *not twenty years* founded: nay, allowing the Greek date not *fifty*. I ſay this, independently of the great improbability of feuds having ſprung up ſo early among Chriſtians, were the religion taught by its founder of that mild character ſo much vaunted by

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the *Chriſtian* profeſſors of it. To ſay that this Epiſtle was written towards the end of the reign of Domitian only encreaſes the difficulty; for, independently of this being contrary to the teſtimony of the Latin Fathers, who muſt be allowed to be the beſt authority upon this head, the traditionary teſtimony is hereby reduced from one hundred to ſeventy years, and of courſe impoſſible to be forgotten. I am even liberal in theſe calculations, as it is the general opinion among Chriſtian writers, that Chriſtianity was not preached at Rome before the reign of Nero, or twenty years after the time I allow it. Juſtin Martyr ſays expreſsly, that no one preached Chriſtianity to the Gentiles before the Apoſtles themſelves *; and Dr. Lardner has laid down the date of Matthew's Goſpel to be about the year A. D. 64, who is by the ancients allowed to have been the firſt Apoſtle who wrote a Goſpel, and that too before the Apoſtles left the country to preach to the Gentiles. To proceed.

This writer, Section 6, mentions the Danaides and Dirce. To quote fable may be thought ſtrange in ſo early a Chriſtian Father. Section 19, He

* See Firſt Part Diſq. p. 13.

calls

calls the *Father* the creator of all things, which is contrary to true orthodox—Ibidem, Section 20. In Section 21, I think he plainly alludes to the Docetæ: for after mentioning certain boasters of their knowledge, he mentions immediately after the *blood* of Jesus Christ. Sections 23, 24, 25, as Cotelerius observes *, shew there are a few far-fetched types in this Epistle, as well as in that of Barnabas. If the learned will admit that the Marcionites are alluded to in the 21st Section, and which cannot reasonably be disputed, as the Fathers themselves cite these passages in the New Testament, in which we find a similar phraseology, against the Marcionites, the true date of this Epistle must be placed *after* the origin of the Marcionite Heresy.

Mr. Gibbon observes, vol. i. p. 584. n. 110. "that "the Epistle of Clemens does not lead us to discover "any traces of episcopacy either at Corinth or Rome." I own that I think that Sections 42 and 44 necessarily infer it at both places. I would not notice this particular, but, lest the silence of this writer upon so material a point should be adduced against me in fa-

* In Judicio de Ep. Barn.

vour

vour of the antiquity of this Epiſtle, and ſupported with the authority of this moſt ingenious writer.

We have a fragment of a ſecond Epiſtle to the Corinthians aſcribed to the ſame Clemens, which was held to be apocryphal by the ancients: and notwithſtanding what the learned Cotelerius has advanced in ts favour, which however equally affects the *authenticity of the Acts of the Apoſtles*, it is, I apprehend, almoſt univerſally deemed to be ſpurious by the learned moderns. A principal objection to its being genuine is the quotations from apocryphal books: though, in the opinion of the learned Photius, the firſt Epiſtle is not quite free from this impurity. The 9th Section, in which the author ſpeaks concerning the reſurrection of the dead, which was denied by the Docetæ, and all the Gnoſtics, places the true date of this Epiſtle after the riſe of the Gnoſtic Hereſy, that is long after the apoſtolic age. See Firſt Part Diſq. p. 41.

I ſhall next conſider the epiſtles aſcribed to St. Ignatius, who, Dr. Lardner affirms, is allowed by all to have been biſhop of Antioch; yet I muſt acknowledge, that notwithſtanding this unanimity of the ancients

and

and moderns, I am bold enough to queſtion not only his having been biſhop of Antioch, but even his ever having had an exiſtence. Firſt, it is not determined by the ancients whether he was the *firſt* biſhop of Antioch after Peter, or the *ſecond* or the *third**. Euſebius ſays he was the ſecond, and Jerome the third. This diſagreement among the ancients muſt appear ſtill more extraordinary, when we conſider the reſpectability of his ſee, Antioch, the third city of the Roman world; and this, too, notwithſtanding Irenæus, who was from Aſia, ſpeaks of him, who is univerſally allowed by the moderns to have flouriſhed in the ſecond century, and who was probably born early in the ſecond century, and may be deemed almoſt a contemporary of St. Ignatius. Secondly, We are informed by the earlieſt account which we have of this martyrdom, and which is written by an eye-witneſs, if we are to believe its author, that it took place in the ninth year of Trajan, or A. D. 106, in the conſulſhip of Senecio and Sura; but they were not conſuls till the year 107, as is allowed by the learned moderns. Thirdly, This account mentions that he

* See Lardner, vol. ii. p. 69, laſt ed.

was

was condemned when Trajan was at Antioch; but it is alſo well known to the learned that Trajan was not at Antioch before the year 112, or ſix years after the time of the martyrdom, as determined by the firſt narrator. Biſhop Horſley, with the more celebrated moderns, Pearſon, Lloyd, Pagi, Le Clerc, Fabricius, places this tranſaction in the year 116, ten years after the original hiſtorian, who declares himſelf an eye-witneſs. But is it to be conceived, that the original writer, if he lived in the ſame century, or even though he were not an eye-witneſs but had lied in this particular, could have ſo egregiouſly blundered as to have erred *ten* years? Such an idea is abſurd. Would not Irenæus, who was an Aſian, have corrected the relation of the original narrator, when he mentions the martyrdom of this holy biſhop, had he thought there was any thing materially erroneous in his account? Would not Euſebius and Jerome, when ſpeaking of this martyrdom, inſtead of only making it one year later, namely the tenth of Trajan, when Senecio and Sura were conſuls, have further obſerved the other chronological difficulties which accompanied the firſt relation, ſuch as Trajan's not being at An-

tioch in the tenth year of his reign, which they knew as well as the moderns. But if they had, like theſe, placed this martyrdom in the year 112 or 116, they were ſenſible that they would have written without any authority at all: they therefore abided, as well as they could, by the original account, which, in the age in which it was drawn up, anſwered very well for thoſe perſons for whom it was intended, being nothing more than a groſs deluſion, fabricated to impoſe on the credulity of perhaps well meaning and honeſt individuals, and who in the main deſpiſed critical learning, by which the forgery might be eaſily proved. Theſe learned writers, therefore, knowing that the relation was unfounded, but ſtill conſcious that ſuch relations promoted the cauſe of Chriſtianity, inſerted it, with the trifling alteration I have noticed, in their writings; regardleſs of the almoſt ineffaceable ſtain which it has left on the memory of one of the greateſt and moſt amiable of men, the Emperor Trajan. But to protect the character of a Heathen, however virtuous, was of little relative conſequence, when put in oppoſition with advancing the religion of the ſaints. Modern Chriſtians, however, inſtead

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of ſuſpecting a narative loaded with obvious chronological difficulties, and highly improbable from the character of the prince, have diſplayed their ingenuity in reconciling, *by any means*, with hiſtoric truth, a relation which diſgraces human nature, leſt, perhaps, Chriſtianity ſhould be obliged to abandon one of her triumphs, diſgraceful triumph! over Paganiſm. But independently of the marks of time, ſo particularly mentioned by the original writer, being utterly irreconcileable with hiſtory, I ſhall farther ſhew from the epiſtles themſelves of Ignatius, whether the ſhorter and more genuine, or the longer, that they were compoſed *long after* the reign of this amiable Prince; but before I enter upon examining them, I ſhall conſider the celebrated martyrdom of this Saint, as alſo that of Polycarp; and the more than ſavage butchery of the martyrs at Lyons.

Tertullian, whoſe character, as allowed by all, is that of an enthuſiaſtic bigot, who had the unparalleled impudence to cite the letters of Marcus Aurelius as undoubted proof, that a legion of Chriſtian ſoldiers, when his army was oppreſſed with drought, by their prayers obtained rain from heaven; though

Origen*, who flouriſhed ſhortly after Tertullian, aſſures us it was unlawful for Chriſtians even to reſiſt invading enemies in battle. How then could they be ſuppoſed to form a part of an invading army? Moreover, Tertullian had the credulity, or perhaps I ſhould ſay, effrontery to aſſure us, that Tiberius Cæſar propoſed to the Roman ſenate the enrolling or adopting Chriſt among the gods of Rome. Yet this very Tertullian, whoſe abilities are unqueſtionable, who reſided in a flouriſhing commercial city, Carthage, within a few days ſail of Rome, Smyrna, and Lyons, the ſcenes of theſe martyrdoms, which two laſt cities were in thoſe times to the full as commercial as at this day: to ſay nothing of Rome, which contained millions of inhabitants, and which imported a conſiderable portion of its daily proviſion from the neighbourhood of Carthage: nevertheleſs, I ſay, that this fiery bigot, of ardent curioſity, is utterly ſilent concerning thoſe barbarities; but not only ſo, but in expreſs terms gives the lie to them. For he† ex-

* Ad Celſ. p. 79. 253, 259. Ed. Spencer.

† Tentaverat et Domitianus, portio Neronis de crudelitate; ſed qua et homo, facile cœptum repreſſit, reſtitutis quos relegaverat. Tales

ſemper

preſsly aſſures us, that Chriſtians were only perſecuted by wicked princes, and monſters of inhumanity, even in the opinion of the Heathens themſelves, ſuch as Nero and Domitian; whoſe perſecution, according to Tertullian, was very gentle indeed, conſiſting in the temporary baniſhment of a few whom he even recalled. But he alſo aſſures us, that the perſecution carrying on againſt Chriſtians was partly fruſtrated by Trajan, who forbade Chriſtians to be ſought after, alluding to Pliny's Epiſtle and Trajan's Reſcript.— That Marcus Aurelius not only protected them, but retorted againſt their perſecutors that puniſhment pronounced by the laws againſt Chriſtians. In like

ſemper nobis inſecutores, injuſti, impii, turpes, quos et ipſi damnare conſueſtis, a quibus damnatos reſtituere ſoliti eſtis. Ceterum de tot exinde principibus ad hodiernum, divinum humanumque ſapientibus; edite aliquem debellatorem Chriſtianorum. At nos e contrario edimus protectorem, ſi literæ Marci Aurelii graviſſimi imperatoris requirantur, quibus illam Germanicam Sitim, Chriſtianorum forte militum precationibus' impetrato imbri' diſcuſſam conteſtatur. Sicut non palam ab ejuſmodi hominibus poenan dimovit, ita alio modo palam diſperſit, adjecta etiam accuſatoribus damnatione, & quidem tetriore. Quales ergo leges iſtæ, quas adverſus nos ſoli exercent impii, injuſti, turpes, truces, vani, dementes? Quas Trajanus ex parte fruſtratus eſt vetando inquiri Chriſtianos: quas nullus Hadrianus, quamquam curioſitatum omnium explorator; nullus Veſpaſianus, quamquam Judæorum debellator; nullus Pius, nullus Verus impreſſit. Apol. S. 5.

manner

manner that Adrian, Antoninus Pius, Lucius Verus were not perſecutors; and I apprehend that Commodus was never deemed to be a perſecutor. Severus, the ſucceſſor of Commodus, he alſo aſſures us *, was kind to Chriſtians: ſo that we have the teſtimony of this fiery enthuſiaſt, that for the ſpace of one hundred and fourteen years, unleſs ſome Chriſtian adventurer will diſpute with me concerning Commodus not having been a perſecutor, I ſay then that we have an interval of one hundred and fourteen years from the commencement of the reign of Trajan, A. D. 97, to the death of Severus, A. D. 211, during which the Church was not perſecuted, at leaſt by Imperial authority. I might reſt my cauſe here, as this ſingle argument, in the judgment of the unbigotted, would alone be ſufficient to overthrow whatever could be adduced to ſupport theſe martyrdoms. But it being a point of conſiderable importance, I ſhall continue the inveſtigation farther.

The acts of St. Ignatius then informs us, that in the ninth year of the reign of Trajan, after having conquered the Scythians and Dacians, he was at Antioch on his march againſt the Parthians; that Igna-

* Ad Scorp. c. 4.

tius,

tius, biſhop of that city, knowing his intention of deſtroying Chriſtianity, preſented himſelf before him: when, after a ſhort but highly improbable converſation, he was ordered by Trajan to be carried to Rome to be devoured by wild beaſts; which ſentence he received with much joy. Accordingly, having been conveyed to Laodicea, the port of Antioch, he was put on board a ſhip; arriving at Smyrna, he was put aſhore, and received with great kindneſs by Polycarp, biſhop of that city; who, with himſelf, had been a pupil of the Apoſtle John—from thence he is carried to Troas, Neapolis, through Macedonia and Epire to Epidamnus, where embarking he arrived at Puteoli, and thence to the port of the Romans, perhaps Oſtia. Here, underſtanding that the *faithful* intended reſcuing him from ſuffering according to Trajan's ſentence, he entreated them, as he had before done while at Smyrna, not to envy him that happineſs which he ſhould ſhortly enjoy in appearing before his Lord: then praying to the *Son of God* for the Churches—to put a ſtop to the perſecution—to promote mutual love among the brethren—he is carried to the amphitheatre and devoured by wild beaſts:

contrary

contrary to his wiſhes they left unbroken the larger bones, which were collected and ſent to Antioch. This tranſaction took place, according to the original writer, "*on the 13th of the Calends of January*; *that is*, "*the 20th day of December, Sura and Senecio being a* "*ſecond time conſuls, of theſe things being an eye-wit-* "*neſs*," &c.

Here the writer declares himſelf to be an eye-witneſs; and though the account labours under inextricable difficulties, yet it is evidently the ſource whence all the ſucceeding hiſtorians have drawn their relations. The difficulties are many and obvious to the learned: for the ſatisfaction of other readers, I ſhall, beſides theſe already noticed, point out a few.

Firſt, It is highly improbable that a priſoner, condemned by the Emperor himſelf, ſhould be brought ſuch a circuitous journey to Rome; but ſtill more ſo, that he ſhould be permitted, during his journey, to be viſited by the *brethren*, whom he was encouraging by letters, for he wrote no fewer than ſeven while on his way, to perſevere in that religion which the Emperor was reſolved to exterminate. Is it uſual for ſoldiers ſo remiſsly to execute the orders of their ſuperiors

riors—of Trajan their beloved Emperor, and ſucceſsful leader. I believe few will be hardy enough to affirm it;—unleſs perhaps thoſe who may think, that as God *hardened* the heart of Pharoah, he might in like manner *ſoften* that of thoſe ſoldiers who guarded this holy ſaint, but who, notwithſtanding their gentle treatment of him, calls them leopards.

Secondly, An eye-witneſs could not have been miſtaken in the perſons who were conſuls, which this writer aſſuredly was.

In a relation which we have of this martyrdom in Metaphraſtes we are informed, that *Trajan conſulted the Roman Senate at Antioch*, as if the Roman Senate accompanied the Emperor; and that Ignatius was offered the high prieſthood by Trajan if he would change his religion. The mere mentioning ſuch abſurdities is their confutation.

I proceed to the martyrdom of the bleſſed Polycarp, biſhop of Smyrna. Our knowledge of this tranſaction is derived from an Epiſtle from the church of Smyrna to the church of Philadelphia, a city of Lydia, according to ſome copies; but according to others to the church of Philomelia, a city of Greater Phrygia.

This diſagreement will duly impreſs ſceptical readers. The Epiſtle obſerves, that Polycarp was the twelfth that ſuffered martyrdom at this time, which is ſomewhat extraordinary: ſeeing that whether this martyrdom took place in the reign of Adrian—or Antoninus Pius—or Marcus Aurelius (for the learned have not yet ſettled to which of theſe it ſhould be placed); it is difficult to account for Tertullian's acquitting theſe three princes of perſecution, when one of them muſt have been guilty, had this martyrdom ever taken place in effect. It farther informs us, that it happened under the proconſulſhip of Statius Quadratus; and the Alexandrine Chronicle ſays in the year of our æra 133. The judicious Tillemont, however, is ſo far from being impoſed upon by this date, that he ſcruples not to place it in the year 166; others even as late as 169: yet one would imagine, that the author of the Chronicle ſhould have been as capable of determining the true date of this remarkable tranſaction as any of the ingenious moderns. He is, beſides, very particular in what he puts down: it runs thus: "Olympiad 235—Index 1—Marcus and "Lucius 4—Ælianus and Paſtor conſuls, anno 133."

By

By what I have ſaid, I do not mean to defend the chronology, or date of the Alexandrine chronicle: it is utterly abſurd. But it ſhews, notwithſtanding this tranſaction is mentioned by ſeveral of the ancients, yet that there remained no genuine monument to direct them in fixing the date of it; which circumſtance alone ſhould create ſuſpicion. We are alſo told, in the firſt relation, that Philip of Tralles was high-prieſt, and alſo Aſiarch. The nature of this laſt office I have not ſeen clearly explained: but that a native of Tralles ſhould be high-prieſt at Smyrna, a far more conſiderable city, appears improbable.—But to the martyrdom.

This holy biſhop, we are informed, foreſeeing the ſtorm, retired a ſmall diſtance from Smyrna; but when diſcovered by the ſoldiers who were ſent in queſt of him, he boldly avowed himſelf to be the perſon whom they ſought after. When brought before the Proconſul, profeſſing himſelf to be a Chriſtian, he is ordered by him to be devoured by wild beaſts. The Proconſul, however, being informed by Philip the Aſiarch, that That was not allowable, as he had ful-

filled his engagements in regard of the public games *. Upon which the Proconſul orders him to the flames. When the pile was ſet fire to, oh, ſtrange to tell! the flames, inſtead of devouring the body of this holy ſaint, ſurrounded it; inſomuch that the ſpectators, enraged, ordered the perſon appointed for this purpoſe, to put him to death, which he did by poniarding him: when, oh wonderful to relate! a dove flew out of the wound, and ſo much blood flowed from it, though he was eighty ſix years old, as to extinguiſh the flames. Upon this the devil, fearing that the Chriſtians ſhould have his remains, ſuggeſted to Nicetas, the father of Herod, the brother of Alces, to go to the Proconſul, and perſuade him not to give the body for burial: but a quarrel ariſing among the Jews, who were great ſticklers upon all ſuch buſineſſes againſt the Chriſtians, the Centurion had the body placed in the midſt of the fire, and burned it: the remains were collected by the Chriſtians, and afterwards duly honoured. Obſervations upon this tranſaction are needleſs. However,

* I do not underſtand my author here, nor the commentators; but follow, to the beſt of my abilities, Rufinus the ancient expoſitor, who ſhould be beſt acquainted with the nature of the office; but it is of no conſequence, in regard of my argument.

I cannot

I cannot here paſs by cenſuring Dr. Lardner, who mentions nothing of the flames ſurrounding the body without touching it—of the dove—of the blood—of the devil.——But inſtead of following the original relation, follows that given by Euſebius. Nay, he does not even do that ſame, for Euſebius does mention the circumſtances of the blood, and the devil; and though he ſeems to have forgotten the dove, in revenge he mentions a particular not obſerved in the Epiſtle; namely, that a voice from Heaven was heard by many [*Chriſtians* I preſume], deſiring Polycarp to be of good courage. From hence it is evident, that Dr. Lardner followed neither the relation in the Epiſtle of the Church of Smyrna, nor even his authority Euſebius, who ſeems to have known no other relation of this martyrdom than that in the Epiſtle, but has given us a garbled account of it. Perhaps he dreaded telling the whole truth, leſt his work ſhould, with all perſons of common ſenſe, be thought to lay the axe to the root of that religion which he laboured ſo much to eſtabliſh. I ſhall obſerve, that had ſuch a perſon as Statius Quadratus been Proconſul, the moderns could have had no pretext for placing ſo much later the date

of

of this martyrdom than the original narrator: for which reaſon they ſuppoſe, that the paragraph in which this is mentioned, is an interpolation, or addition of a later writer. However, if this notion was well grounded, it is difficult to conceive, the author of the Alexandrine chronicle ſhould have followed him in his error. Moreover, admitting this notion to be well-founded, the relation will become ſtill more ſuſpicious; for though we are informed who was the Aſiarch, and Irenarch, whoſe office reſembled that of Conſtable, yet the Proconſul, though named *eight* times by *this title*, and *once* by that of Preſident, is not mentioned at all by his *own* name, if we affirm that the paragraph containing the name of Statius Quadratus does not belong to the original narration, which muſt be allowed to be a conſiderable difficulty. Inconſiderable people are unknown; but perſons inveſted with the Proconſular dignity muſt be known to all, therefore dangerous to tell tales of them, as their deſcendants would refute the charge when publiſhed.

I ſhall proceed to the martyrs of Lyons and Vienne, of which we have an account in the firſt chapter

of

of the fifth book of the Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory of Euſebius, which is taken from the relation of theſe churches, ſent by them to the churches of Aſia and Phrygia.

He informs us, that this perſecution commenced in the ſeventeenth year of Marcus Aurelius; and obſerves, that from the violence of it, his readers may form a juſt idea of what Chriſtians had ſuffered in other provinces. Strange, paſſing ſtrange! that Tertullian, who lived in thoſe times, ſhould be ignorant of them, and who was a Chriſtian, and has beſides acquitted Marcus Aurelius of being a perſecutor. I am, ſecondly, to obſerve, that in the relation of this martyrdom, though Euſebius mentions the Preſident ηγεμων *twelve* times by this title, yet he never once mentions his name. Euſebius was a profeſſed hiſtorian, and muſt have known, that deſcribing a perſon only by his official title, was a very ſuſpicious mode, when ſpeaking of any tranſaction, ſtill more of an improbable one. Thirdly, we find, that ſeveral of the ſufferers were Greeks: the name of their aged biſhop, Pothinus, is affirmed by Valeſius, who is quoted with approbation by Lardner, to be of Greek extraction.

Irenæus,

Irenæus, his ſucceſſor, is by all acknowledged to be a Greek. This muſt appear odd enough in a city in which Latin was only ſpoken, in which language few Greeks ever made much progreſs, but a knowledge of Latin would then be indiſpenſibly neceſſary for its biſhop; as in this early age none but biſhops had the privilege of preaching, and to preach in an unknown language was a refinement as yet unknown. Farther the epiſtle, whence Euſebius has extracted his relation, is written in the joint names of the churches of Lyons and Vienne. This mode is unique in eccleſiaſtical hiſtory: and the diſtance between theſe towns ſhould, it ſeems, preclude ſuch an intimate connection, independently of the improbability of bringing Chriſtians from Vienne to put them to death at Lyons. One would apprehend, if the end of puniſhment, to deter by example, had been the object in view, either of the Proconſul, or Preſident of Gaul, that to puniſh offenders in their own cities, or where they had offended, ſhould have been the mode which ought to have been adopted by him. Farther, as Gaul was a Proconſular government, the title of its governor was not *Hegemon*, but *Anthupatos*. Theſe I apprehend will be deemed to be

ſolid

ſolid objections againſt the whole narrative, even without laying any ſtreſs on the teſtimony of Tertullian acquitting Marcus Aurelius.

I will not harrow the reader's, or my own feeling, with giving the particulars of this horrid butchery. Cruelties which never entered into the imagination of any ſavage, and which Monkiſh ſolitude was only capable of conceiving. It is obſerved, in the relation, that ſeveral, after enduring cruelties ſcarcely conceivable, were placed upon hot iron chairs, where they were dreadfully burned, and the tendons of their limbs rendered uſeleſs: yet, after a ſhort interval, when ſubjected to a repetition of the ſame puniſhment, they recovered the uſe of their limbs. It is alſo obſerved in this letter, that during theſe barbarities, that the Preſident wrote to Marcus Aurelius, informing him how matters ſtood; and that his reſcript was, "that "they who confeſſed Chriſt ſhould be put to death; "but that if any denied themſelves to be Chriſtians, "they might be ſet at liberty." Is it to be believed, that after an interval (for an interval of many days muſt have intervened between the Preſident's letter and the Emperor's reſcript), that the humane Aurelius,

even though philoſophy had not taught him humanity, yet ſtill his tender conſtitution ſhould, was capable of giving ſuch anſwer? To ſuppoſe it, argues a total ignorance of human nature, nay utter imbecility; and evinces, that the greateſt of men, a Scaliger, a Lardner, &c. when ſubject to religious prejudices, do not, in ſound judgment, ſurpaſs children.

Farther, Euſebius mentions this tranſaction *ten* years earlier in his Chronicle than in his Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory; which ſhews, that he had no undoubted records to guide him. However, the learned have diſcovered that the relation in the former, with regard to the date, is to be diſregarded *; and beſides, that the two accounts *do not* diſagree. If the moderns are not *learned* in eccleſiaſtical hiſtory, no one after this will deny that they are *ingenious*.

I had made the extract from Tertullian, p. 284, before I perceived that the moderns had, in like manner, turned that deciſive paſſage in favour of my argument againſt me †. However, as it is obſerved by the Fathers, that the Devil himſelf could quote ſcripture to

* See Lardner, p. 149, laſt edit. † See Lardner, firſt edit. v. ii. p. 225. laſt edit. v. viii. p. 441.

ſupport

ſupport his cauſe, it is not ſurpriſing that bigotted Chriſtians ſhould take advantage of an unlucky *forte*, or *by chance* in the relation, which evidently applies to the efficacy of the ſoldiers prayers, and not at all to the Emperor's letter, which is evinced not only by Euſebius's tranſlation of Tertullian in his Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, and alſo by a ſimilar paſſage in Tertullian againſt Scapula *, but alſo by the verb *conteſtatur (it is proved)*. But as Tertullian clearly affirms, that in the opinion of the heathens themſelves, the Chriſtian perſecutors were wicked and abandoned princes, I ſhall give up the entire argument, when it ſhall be ſhewn, that in the opinion of the heathens, Trajan and Marcus Aurelius were eſteemed wicked or abandoned princes.

Perhaps the Epiſtle of Pliny to Trajan, and his reſcript, will be adduced againſt me, as concluſive teſtimony of the latter's having been a perſecutor. But ſurely the Epiſtle itſelf bears on the face of it obvious marks of ſpurioufneſs. However I ſhall conſider it, firſt laying before the reader, what is agreed

* Note, c. 4.

on by all writers, concerning Pliny's private character.

That he was a man of buſineſs, and of courſe accurate—poſſeſſed of elegant knowledge and accompliſhments—and, except in what concerned Chriſtianity, of great humanity, is the unanimous ſentiment of all writers, who have ſpoken of him. That a perſon of this character ſhould be guilty of atrocities againſt human beings, be their private opinions what they might, ought not to be admitted except on the moſt unexceptionable teſtimony. Yet what evidence have we of this fact laid to his charge? None; except an Epiſtle which bears *internal* marks of ſpuriouſneſs, independently of its giving a moſt favourable character of the individuals who were the objects of his barbarous bigotry. Bigots *ſeldom* ſpeak well of thoſe whom they perſecute; in fact, if there be any favourable circumſtances that ought to be mentioned by them they are concealed, and their errors ſhockingly overcharged: and it is well known that Chriſtians, in the age of which we are ſpeaking, were not exempt from this too common human frailty: there being few vices which they have not imputed to the Gnoſtics, though

from

from the well known tenets of theſe we ought to expect that they were a very virtuous ſect. Farther, the ſilence of the Chriſtians concerning this letter for nearly a century, ſhould make cautious perſons apprehenſive of forgery, when in thoſe ages publiſhing writings with falſe titles is well known to have been very common. Neither were the Chriſtians, even in reſpect of their ſacred writings, exempt from blame on this head, if we are to credit Celſus's Jew (who I ſhall ſhortly ſhew to have been a Nazarene, or believer in Jeſus), and Julian. Trypho the Jew, in Juſtin Martyr's Dialogue, has the ſame imputation againſt them in regard of the Old Teſtament, who was alſo a Nazarene. I ſhall however enter farther into particulars.

Lardner ſays *, that "the introduction of this "Epiſtle is rather more formal than ordinary, be-"cauſe of the importance of the preſent ſubject of "enquiry." This obſervation, inaſmuch as it regards the *importance of the ſubject*, is unfounded: Chriſtianity being in the opinion of the Heathens a

* Vol. vii. pag. 276, laſt edition, and vol. ii. pag. 16, Heathen Teſtimonies.

ſubject

ſubject of little moment, as is evinced from their almoſt total ſilence concerning it for two centuries *; which fact ſhews, that all thoſe edicts of Trajan, of Adrian, &c. &c. are forgeries, unleſs we ſuppoſe that the hiſtorians of thoſe times omitted to notice thoſe tranſactions, which engaged the attention of government ſo much as to demand *unuſual* reſcripts; than which there cannot be a more improbable ſuppoſition. Therefore if there be a more than ordinary formality in the introduction of this Epiſtle, it will add, inſtead of leſſening, to the ſtrength of my arguments againſt its genuineneſs.

"Pliny to the Emperor Trajan health †.

"It is cuſtomary for me, Sir, to refer to you con-
"cerning all matters of which I have any doubt.
"For who can better reſolve my doubt, or inſtruct
"my ignorance? I was *never* preſent at the trials of
"Chriſtians: therefore I am ignorant what and how
"far it may be cuſtomary either to puniſh, or make
"inqueſt, after them. Nor have I been a little at a

* Vid. Gibbon, vol. i. p. 634. n. 24.

† I ſhall only give thoſe parts of the letter which I ſhall make the ſubject of my remarks, as the original and tranſlations are every where at hand.

"loſs

" loſs to determine, whether age or ſtrength ought not " to cauſe a difference in my conduct towards them; " or whether it ought not to be regarded: [alſo] " whether pardon ought not to be given to the pe- " nitent, or that it ſhould not be of any avail to a " perſon to ceaſe to be a Chriſtian, who was at all " a Chriſtian: [alſo] whether the name itſelf, though " free of crimes, or crimes as neceſſarily adhering to " the name, are to be puniſhed.

" In the mean time I have followed this method, " in regard of thoſe who have been *impleaded before* " *me* as if they were Chriſtians. *I* interrogated them " whether they were Chriſtians. Confeſſing, *I again* " and *again* interrogated, threatening puniſhment: " perſevering, *I* ordered them to be led away. For " *I* entertained no doubt, whatever it might be that " they ſhould confeſs, that inflexible contumacy and " obſtinacy ought ſurely to be puniſhed."

The next two paragraphs reſpect an information againſt Chriſtians who renounce their religion, which, according to them, had nothing to be found fault with in it. He then proceeds:

" For

" For which reaſon *I* believed it more neceſſary to " find out, even by torture, from two maid ſervants, " which are called Miniſters, what truth there " might be in it. But *I* diſcovered nothing elſe be- " ſide a wicked and boundleſs ſuperſtition *."

In the *firſt* paragraph Pliny plainly ſays, that he was *never* preſent at trials of Chriſtians, which the *ſecond* contradicts. Is it to be credited that the humane Pliny would have fixed upon the weaker ſex in the firſt inſtance, in order to extort the ſecrets of the ſect? Pliny proceeds: " Suſpending, therefore, the

* Solenne eſt mihi, Domine, omnia de quibus dubito, ad te referre. Quis enim poteſt melius vel cunctationem meam regere vel ignorantiam inſtruere? Cognitionibus Chriſtianorum interfui nunquam; ideo neſcio, quid, et quatenus, aut puniri ſoleat, aut quaeri. Nec mediocriter hæſitavi, ſit ne aliquod diſcrimen ætatum, an quamlibet teneri nihil a robuſtioribus differant. Detur ne poenitentiae venia, an ei: qui omnino Chriſtianus fuit, deſiiſſe non proſit; nomen ipſum, etiamſi flagitiis careat, an flagitia cohaerentia nomini puniantur. Interim in iis qui ad me tanquam Chriſtiani deferebantur, hunc ſum ſecutus modum. Interrogavi ipſos, an eſſent Chriſtiani: confitentes, iterum ac tertio interrogavi, ſupplicium minatus: perſeverantes duci juſſi. Neque enim dubitabam, qualequnque eſſet quod faterentur, pervicaciam certe et inflexibilem obſtinationem, debere puniri . . . . .

Quo magis neceſſarium credidi, ex duabus ancillis quæ Miniſtræ dicebantur, quid eſſet veri et per tormenta quaerere.

" judicial

" judicial proceeding I have recourſe to you for ad-
" vice: for the matter appeared to me worthy of
" deliberation, on account of the number of perſons in
" danger of ſuffering. For many of every age, of every
" order, and even of both ſexes, are and will be accuſed.
" For the contagion of this ſuperſtition has not only
" overrun the cities, but even the towns and coun-
" try, which it appears can be ſtopped and cor-
" rected. It is very evident, that the temples, which
" were already almoſt forſaken, begin to be frequented,
" and the ſacred ſolemnities, after a long intermiſſion,
" are revived: and victims are every where a ſelling,
" for which for ſome time it was very difficult to
" find a purchaſer. From hence it is eaſy to ima-
" gine what a multitude of men may be reclaimed,
" if the penitent are pardoned *." Would one believe

* Ideoque dilata cognitione ad conſulendum ad te decucurri. Viſa eſt enim mihi res digna conſultatione, maxime propter periclitantium numerum. Multi enim omnis ætatis, omnis ordinis, utriuſque ſexus etiam vocantur in periculum, et vocabuntur. Neque enim Civitates tantum, ſed vicos etiam atque agros ſuperſtitionis iſtius contagio pervagata eſt: Quæ videtur ſiſti et corrigi poſſe. Certe ſatis conſtat, prope jam deſolata templa cœpiſſe celebrari, et ſacra ſolemnia diu intermiſſa repeti: paſſimque veniré victimas, quarum adhuc rariſſimus emptor veniebatur. Ex quo facile eſt opinari, quæ turba hominum emendari poſſit, ſi fiat poenitentiæ locus. Lib. x. c. 97. ed. Lond. 1790.

after this that the province of Pontus, which adjoined Bythinia, and which was comprehended in the proprætorſhip of Pliny, ſhould in ſomewhat leſs than a century and a half after contain only ſeventeen Chriſtians. Compare Lard. vol. vii. p. 287, note *d*, laſt ed. Vol. ii. p. 1. *Heathen Teſt.* firſt ed. with vol. iii. p. 33, laſt ed. and vol. iv. p. 498, *Heathen Teſt.* firſt ed.

I will not enter into the particulars of Trajan's reſcript, but only obſerve, that "he deſires that Chriſ-"tians were not to be ſought after; but that if they "were brought before Pliny, that they ſhould be "puniſhed." To make uſe of the ſtrong and very proper language of Tertullian: "O abſurd ſentence! "to forbid, as *innocent*, that they ſhould be ſought af-"ter; and, as *wicked*, to command them to be pu-"niſhed." The abſurdity of it, conſidering Tertullian's great acuteneſs, and of his having been bred up to the law, ought naturally to have ſuggeſted to him, had he not been an enthuſiaſtic bigot, that it muſt be ſpurious.

I truſt, therefore, that when the intelligent reader conſiders and reflects upon the entire relation—its

incompa-

incompatibility with the character of a humane or intelligent man, and a man of buſineſs too—and alſo upon the clear teſtimony of Tertullian, acquitting Trajan of perſecution, as well as all the other Emperors of whom the Heathens ſpake *well of*, that he will place to the number of Chriſtian forgeries both the letter and reſcript of Trajan and Pliny.

Should it be obſerved that Tertullian, in his letter to Scapula, contradicts what he ſays in acquitting thoſe princes of whom the Romans ſpoke well of, in imputing to Arrius Antoninus the moſt atrocious barbarities: I anſwer, that admitting Tertullian's charge to be well founded, it does not follow that Arrius Antoninus's perſecution took place in the reign of Trajan or his ſucceſſors; but, in the opinion of Lardner, *before* the reign of Trajan: for Lardner allows that we have none of Pliny's Epiſtles after the expiration of his proprætorſhip, which he fixes in the years 106, 107; and that the Arrius Antoninus, to whom one of his letters is addreſſed, was an old man, who had enjoyed the proconſular dignity, which was generally conferred at the age of between forty and

fifty; ſo that if we ſay he was Proconſul at the age of forty-five, it will place his proconſulſhip in the year 91 or 92, in the reign of Domitian, in which there appears to have been a ſhort perſecution; ſo that the two paſſages are eaſily reconciled, but upon every other ſuppoſition are manifeſtly contradictory. If this reaſoning be admitted, it will overthrow Mr. Gibbon's opinion, who ſuppoſes that the *A*rrius Antoninus, to whom Tertullian alludes, was the Emperor Antoninus Pius, for he was only twenty-one at the moſt when Pliny wrote. See Lard. vol. vii. p. 326. 328, laſt ed. Heathen Teſtimonies, vol. ii. p. 58, &c. Gibbon, vol. i. p. 662, n. 96. Farther, this teſtimony of Tertullian concerning the perſecution of Arrius Antoninus, ſhews that he was not a perſon who would miſs or overlook even the ſmalleſt perſecution; and is a concluſive argument againſt the reality of the martyrdoms of Ignatius, Polycarp, and the Martyrs of Lyons and Vienne, concerning which he is ſilent, though in regard of theſe he had far better opportunities to be informed than what had happened during the proconſulſhip of Arrius Antoninus

in

in Leſſer Aſia: I ſay this, independently of theſe latter martyrdoms, Ignatius, &c. being much nearer his own time *.

I do not know whether the paſſage concerning the Chriſtians, in the fifteenth book of the Annals of Tacitus, has ever been ſuſpected to have been interpolated, or a Chriſtian forgery. However this may be, it appears to me to be one.

* I truſt I ſhall be excuſed for giving my ſentiments of the following paſſage in this Epiſtle of Pliny, though foreign to my object, which has cauſed much trouble to the critics, and which, for ought I know, is hitherto unexplained by any of them: perhaps I ſhall be alſo found to fail in the attempt.

Affirmabant autem, hanc fuiſſe ſummam vel culpæ ſuæ, vel erroris, quod eſſent ſoliti ſtato die ante lucem convenire, carmenque Chriſto quaſi Deo, *dicere ſecum invicem.* "But they affirmed, that the whole "of their fault or error was this, that upon an appointed day they were "accuſtomed to aſſemble before it was light, and to repeat with the "others [that is the aſſembly] a hymn or prayer to Chriſt, as to God."

The difficulty lies in *dicere ſecum invicem*, which I have rendered *to repeat with others*; and think that in doing ſo I am ſupported by Rufinus, who expounds αλληλοις twice in the fifth ſection of Clement's Epiſtle to James, Biſhop of Jeruſalem, the Lord's brother, by *ſibi invicem*, which muſt mean in this place *others*. To ſay, with Lardner, that this phraſe is only tantamount to *amen*, is obviouſly abſurd. Moreover, independently of the authority of Rufinus, which I apprehend ſhould be deemed concluſive, my expoſition is that only which elicits ſenſe from the paſſage, and correſponds with fact.

Tacitus

Tacitus ſays, " The infamous report" (that it might not be credited that the ſetting the city on fire had been ordered) " abated not in conſequence of the re-
" ports ſpread by the friends of government, nor by
" the liberal preſents of the prince to the populace,
" nor by offerings to the gods. In order, therefore,
" to deſtroy the rumour, Nero *falſely* accuſed, and
" puniſhed in the moſt exquiſite manner, guilty per-
" ſons, whom, hated for their vices, the mob
" called Chriſtians. The author of this ſect was
" Chriſt, who, in the reign of Tiberius, ſuffered
" capitally, while Pontius Pilate was Procurator. The
" deſtructive ſuperſtition, at that time repreſſed, again
" burſt forth, not only throughout Judæa, but even
" through the city [Rome], whither flow from all
" quarters whatever is atrocious and ſhameful, and
" flouriſh. Therefore, thoſe who were firſt taken up
" confeſſed: afterwards, from the information of thoſe,
" a vaſt multitude were joined with them, not ſo much
" for the having ſet the city on fire, as from the ha-
" tred of mankind. Ludicrous circumſtances were
" ſuperadded on the ſufferers. Some were covered
" with the ſkins of wild beaſts, that they might be
" torn

" torn by dogs; others were crucified; others were as
" torches ſet on fire to give light at the departure
" of day. Nero gave up or offered his gardens for
" this exhibition, and proclaimed the Circenſian
" Games. In the dreſs of a charioteer, he mixed
" with the populace, or directed a chariot. From
" whence pity aroſe, though towards *guilty* perſons,
" and who deſerved the ſevereſt puniſhments, as
" if they were deſtroyed not from public motives,
" but the ſavageneſs of an individual *." I would
aſk the learned reader, Is not the accurate knowledge

* Sed non ope humana, non largitionibus Principis, aut deorum placamentis decedebat infamia, quin juſſum incendium crederetur. Ergo abolendo rumore Nero ſubdidit reos, et quæſitiſſimis poenis afficit, quos per flagitia inviſos vulgus Chriſtianos appellabat. Auctor nominis ejus Chriſtus, qui Tiberio imperitante, per procuratorem Pontium Pilatum ſuplicio affectus erat. Repreſſaque in præſens exitiabilis ſuperſtitio rurſus erumpebat, non modo per Judæum originem ejus mali, ſed per urbem etiam, quo cunctaundique atrocia aut pudenda confluunt, celebranturque. Igitur primo correpti qui fatebantur, deinde indicio eorum multitudo ingens haud perinde in crimine incendii, quam odio humani generis conjuncti ſunt. Et pereuntibus addita ludibria, ut ferarum tergis contecti, laniatu canum interirent, aut crucibus affixi, aut flammandi, atque ubi defeciſſet dies in uſum nocturni luminis urerentur. Hortos ſuos ei ſpectaculo Nero obtulerat, et Circenſe ludicrum edebat, habitu aurigæ permixtus plebi, vel curriculo inſiſtens. Unde quamquam adverſus fontes et noviſſima exempla meritos, miſeratio oriebatur, tanquam non utilitate publica, ſed in ſævitiam unius abſumerentur. Ann. l. 15. c. 44. ed. Gron.

con-

concerning the Jews evinced by this paſſage, inconſiſtent with the ignorance concerning the ſame people manifeſted in the five books of his hiſtory *? Is it to be credited that Tacitus would have expended *ſo many lines* concerning the Chriſtians; and that the writers of the Auguſtan hiſtory ſhould not have expended *ſix* lines upon them, who have treated of a period of nearly two hundred years from Adrian to Conſtantine the Great †? Is it probable that the Chriſtians ſo early merited the hatred of all mankind ‡? That they afterwards did, I ſhall hereafter ſhew. Would this ſaturnine author ſpeak of perſons covered with the ſkins

* See Lardner, vol. vii. p. 256, &c. Heathen Teſt. vol. i. p. 348.

† See Gibbon's Advertiſement, and vol. i. p. 634. n.

‡ I have rendered, odio humani generis, "*from the hatred of mankind.*" Mr. Gibbon, with the learned moderns, renders theſe words *for* [*their*] *hatred of human kind;* acknowledging, however, that the words may ſignify *the hatred of mankind towards them*, the Chriſtians, as I have rendered the paſſage: and alſo that the term *convicti* (I follow the reading of Gronovius, *conjuncti*) does not unite very happily with the reſt of the ſentence, that is according to their expoſition, but which perfectly accords with mine, and therefore is a ſolid proof of its juſtneſs. Farther, my expoſition is in uniſon with the Chriſtian apologiſts, who never omit to exclaim againſt the cauſeleſs ha-tred of mankind againſt them; which, independently of Mr. Gibbon's conceſſion, would fully evince the juſtneſs of my tranſlation. Moreover, Mr. Gibbon, and the moderns, in expounding theſe words are not juſtified in rendering them, for *their* hatred, &c.; there being no term in Tacitus for *their*.

of

of beaſts to be torn by dogs, as a *ludicrous* circumſtance? Is *hortos ſuos ei ſpectaculo* good Latin? Is not the phraſe *Circenſe ludicrum* made uſe of by the Latins, when ſpeaking of the Circenſian games? and were not theſe games exhibited at ſtated times? If ſo, was it in the power of the deſpot to change them? and admitting this, was Tacitus an author that would have omitted mentioning the infringement? I know that Lardner renders theſe words by the *games of the Circus:* but he is evidently unfounded in doing ſo. Farther, Tacitus not only appears in this paſſage to be tolerably well acquainted with the Jewiſh affairs, but even of the affairs of the Chriſtians: nevertheleſs, he has made a material error in what he ſays; for the followers were vulgarly called *Chreſtians*, and not Chriſtians. See Firſt Part, p. 6. Whether theſe objections, and many others which I could adduce of the ſame ſort, will have any weight with the learned, I know not, being too ſuperficial a Latiniſt, and too little acquainted with the Roman manners of this period, even to put my argument in its ſtrongeſt point of view, ſo as to enable myſelf to form perhaps a proper judgment. But I ſhall proceed to other arguments

equally, if not more convincing with the intelligent, than arguments drawn from ſtyle and manners, which, when well known, are indiſputably concluſive; I mean arguments drawn from human nature. And upon this ground I affirm, that neither Nero himſelf, nor no deſpot whatever, *dare* proceed in ſuch a deliberate and ſhockingly atrocious a manner againſt a *vaſt* multitude of the lower claſs of people: and the reaſon is, that the perſons that would be employed to execute the order would, nay muſt be connected with numbers of the ſufferers: and compaſſion and its conſequences muſt neceſſarily ſpring up, and burſt forth, and hurl the unrelenting tyrant from his throne. I will admit that a barbarian—a Thomas Kouli Khan—a Schah Nadir—and other ſuch miſcreants—have been capable of maſſacring entire cities: but then their armies were compoſed of diſtant nations, whoſe avarice and luſts ſmothered the dictates of nature. But the Romans, on the contrary, were a civilized people, and though accuſtomed to the barbarities exhibited in the amphitheatre, were not incapable of pity: beſides, no preſent advantage was to accrue to the executioners, which might deaden the finer feelings. I may add, that

Nero

Nero himſelf was incapable of ſuch atrocity. He poſſeſſed not from nature a tiger's heart. His cruelties, in a great meaſure, originated from his apprehenſions, and the impulſes of ungoverned paſſion. He was a Macbeth, and not a Richard.

There is another paſſage in the fifth book of the Hiſtory of Tacitus, which ſtrikes me alſo to be a Chriſtian interpolation. If this be denied, I ſee not how it can be reaſonably doubted that thoſe extraordinary phenomena, mentioned by Joſephus, did not really happen at the memorable ſiege of Jeruſalem—ſuch as armies fighting in the air—gliſtering arms—the temple ſuddenly illuminated by fire from the clouds—a voice declaring that the *gods* were departing, accompanied with a great noiſe of perſons going out—as being recorded by independent writers, and of different perſuaſions. Should it be objected that Tacitus might have copied Joſephus, I would then aſk how it happened that Tacitus ſays there were only 600,000 perſons encloſed within the walls of Jeruſalem, at the commencement of the ſiege; whereas Joſephus mentions three times that number. If it ſhould be ſaid that the numbers in Joſephus might ap-

pear incredible to him; I will anſwer, that the number could not appear half ſo incredible as what he has recorded*. But notwithſtanding this, and ſome other differences between the relations of Joſephus and Tacitus, no perſon of the ſmalleſt diſcernment can read them both, without acknowledging that one [Joſephus] of them was the baſis or ground-work of the other. But that the paſſage in Tacitus was not written by a heathen Roman, is evident, from his calling Jeruſalem *urbs famoſa*, a famous city: for in the annals of Rome, this city appears not to deſerve the epithet *famoſa*: with regard to Hebrews, or the followers of Jeſus, it might be ſaid to deſerve this epithet; but not ſo with other nations.

There is a very extraordinary paſſage in the life of the Emperor Claudius, by Suetonius, noticed by Lardner. This writer ſays, "That Claudius baniſh-"ed the Jews from Rome, who were continually "making diſturbances, through the inſtigation of "Chreſtus †." How much this paſſage ſupports my

* Lardner has ſhamefully expounded the paſſages which he adduces from the hiſtory of Tacitus.

† Judæos impulſore Chreſto aſſidue tumultuantes Roma expulit. c. 25.

poſition

poſition of Chriſtian being a nickname, it is needleſs to obſerve. Perhaps were I to aſſert its genuineneſs, after queſtioning the paſſages in Tacitus and Pliny, it might be imputed to prejudice. Truly, I have not made up my mind concerning this paſſage. I doubt whether the appellations of Chriſtos or Chreſtos were ſo early known: but I cannot avoid obſerving, that in this paſſage Jeſus, if alluded to, which I think cannot be reaſonably doubted, is noticed by his nick-name, a mark of genuineneſs: whereas in Tacitus he is noticed by his moſt honourable appellation Chriſtus, notwithſtanding his followers are deſcribed by him as perſons of the vileſt character: whereas in Suetonius the ſting is preſerved in the name by which they are diſtinguiſhed; and they are characterized by a quality, quarrelſomeneſs, which we are aſſured by the Fathers was the conſequence of the diviſion of the Jews and Chriſtians for at leaſt five centuries after Jeſus.

It will doubtleſs be obſerved, that if this paſſage be allowed to be genuine, it will militate againſt my date of the name Chriſtian in the Preliminary Diſquiſition, where I fixed it about the year 100. This

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I acknowledge. But at the time I compoſed that Diſquiſition I was only acquainted with the Fathers through the Moderns, which I have more than once intimated: and I confeſs that even then I ſuſpected the paſſage to be interpolated, having had no intimation or hint from the Moderns of the eternal feuds which prevailed among thoſe believers in Jeſus, who denied that he was the Chriſt, and were called Jews, and thoſe believers in him who held him to be the Chriſt, and Son of God. Neither is the reader to ſuppoſe that, though every author who takes up his pen muſt have his "Syſtem," that I had taken up mine ſo preſumptuouſly upon my little reading as to imagine that I ſhould proceed without making errors. This I do not pretend to. My ſyſtem originally was, and which I ſhall now, that I have myſelf read a conſiderable number of the Fathers, maintain, that all the Hebrew believers in Jeſus, without exception, and the greateſt part of the proſelytes from amongſt the Gentiles, held that Jeſus was neither the *Chriſt* nor *Son of God*. If I make good this point, I ſhall deem my ſyſtem ſolid, and that I did not raſhly or cauſeleſsly take up my pen; for whatever

ever was the belief of the Hebrew believers will, with all unbigotted perſons, be allowed to have been the genuine doctrine taught by Jeſus: but when to this is added the belief of the greater part of Heathen proſelytes coinciding with the Hebrew or Nazarenes, methinks, that even bigots themſelves may open their eyes to the truth. But even though I ſhould fail in this point, yet I ſtill maintain, that if I have confuted or pointed out the miſtakes of Dr. Knowles, Biſhop Horſley, &c. that the propriety of the title to this work is evinced: and upon this head I ſhall ſubmit to the judgment of the learned. Farther, the reader cannot have a more deciſive proof of my not deceiving him, than by my not abiding by what I find untenable; and which, conſidering the little knowledge which actually exiſts in regard of the ſubject I am treating of, might be unnoticed by critics for a conſiderable length of time, and which I perhaps ought *prudentially* myſelf to diſcover in another edition, if theſe ſheets ever merited public attention: but my object is the inveſtigation of Truth, and I hold myſelf bound by every principle which can have any influence upon a perſon

believing

believing in a future ſtate of rewards and puniſhments, or a gentleman, to lay before my reader, inaſmuch as the brevity of my plan will admit, whatever will enable him to form a proper judgment. Moreover, if Chriſtianity, or the religion taught by Jeſus, be a ſyſtem of morality delivered by him to mankind, as being authorized by the Almighty Being, and is actually unknown, it is not to be ſuppoſed that any perſon, in developing a ſyſtem ſo tortured by human prejudies for ſo many ages, ſhould not commit errors, which an accurate knowledge of facts can only rectify. In like manner, as in Natural Philoſophy, many things are neceſſarily ſuppoſed which farther experience proves to be ill-founded. Luther himſelf, when he took up his pen againſt the exactions of the See of Rome, was far, very far indeed! from having an idea that in the end his progreſſive information would lead him to ſeparate entirely from the Mother Church. This progreſſive knowledge, as juſt obſerved, is the moſt unequivocal teſt that the reader can have that the author is neither actuated by ambition, nor the vain-glory of maintaining, contrary to fact, a new hypotheſis.

After what I have juſt mentioned, I will not ſcruple to ſay, that I entertain a ſtrong ſuſpicion that Jeſus flouriſhed perhaps half a century earlier than what is commonly and univerſally apprehended; and that Virgil, in the fourth Eclogue, alludes to the Jewiſh notion of a temporal deliverer; and that Horace alſo, in his Judæus Apella, glances at Jewiſh credulity in believing a future ſtate of rewards and puniſhments. The former notion is, I believe, condemned by all; the latter has never been ſuſpected.

Suetonius mentions, in his Life of Nero, "that "the Chriſtians, perſons who had embraced a new "ſuperſtition, were puniſhed." Here it is obſervable, firſt, though the Chriſtians are ſaid to have been puniſhed, yet they are not ſaid to have been puniſhed at Rome, as Tacitus has related; nor in that more than ſavage manner mentioned by him; and which, conſidering the prejudice of Suetonius againſt the Cæſars, it is ſcarcely conceivable but that he would have mentioned the tranſaction particularly, had it been founded upon facts, ſeeing that he has thought fit to record their having been baniſhed by Claudius, and their having been puniſhed by Nero.

How much more ſhould he not have been incited to dwell upon the atrocities mentioned by Tacitus.

Being only acquainted with the writings of Philo the Jew, and Joſephus, by means of the quotations from their writings in Lardner, Prieſtley, and Gibbon, it may be deemed preſumptuous laying before the reader any notion of mine concerning theſe writers. Be this however as it may, I cannot help thinking, from almoſt every citation which I have met with from their writings, that neither one nor the other was a Hebrew. It is evident, that thoſe paſſages from Philo the Jew, in the ſecond volume of Dr. Prieſtley's Hiſtory of Opinions, could never have been compoſed by a believer in the Ten Commandments. The extracts from Joſephus in Lardner ſavour ſo much of romance, that the writer would never be liſtened to except by bigots. However, there is one concluſive argument againſt his being a Hebrew, if we are to credit Dr. Playfair, namely, that in his writings he has followed the Septuagint chronology: a work in no repute with Hebrews, if we are to believe what Trypho the Jew ſays in his Dialogue with

Juſtin

Juſtin Martyr *. I am incapable of conceiving a ſtronger argument againſt the genuineneſs of any writing, as of our Bible, than its not being allowed by the people from whoſe language it was taken to be a fair expoſition, but only ſuch as might ſerve or give ſome ſort of probability to the cauſe of the Chriſtians. But this argument will be ſtill more concluſive when it ſhall be ſhewn by indiſputable evidence that this Trypho, though a Hebrew of the blood of Abraham, as Juſtin emphatically ſays, was not an unbelieving Hebrew, but a Nazarene, or a believing Hebrew, who believed that Jeſus was an honeſt man, and of courſe no impoſtor. Hence it will follow, that what Suetonius alſo ſays, in his Life of Veſpaſian, concerning Joſephus †, is an interpolation of ſome Chriſtian. To render which ſtill more probable, it may be added, that in this paſſage Joſephus the hiſtorian is ſaid to be endowed with the gift of prophecy, which even bigots will hardly acknowledge.

What I have here mentioned concerning Jewiſh and Heathen writers, will not, I truſt, be deemed irrelevant

* See p. 291. Thrilby.

† See Lardner, article Suetonius, Veſpaſian, c. 7.

by the judicious. Should theſe ſheets attract any portion of the public attention I may, perhaps, purſue the ſubject ſtill further: for, though by many it will be deemed a mere loſs of time, nevertheleſs there is a certain uneaſineſs which ever attends partial information, and which neceſſarily obliges the entertainer or propounder to endeavour after conviction.

I have not noticed the alluſions to Chriſtianity in Seneca, Martial, and Juvenal, mentioned by Lardner. They appear to me to be well founded. However, I confeſs, that, except in what concerns Chriſtians, I apprehend the pitched ſhirt, and the being ſet fire to in order to ſerve as torches, to be a puniſhment unknown among the Heathens *prior* to Chriſtianity: and if this notion be well founded it muſt appear very ſingular, that a puniſhment of this nature ſhould be alluded to by Seneca, without his mentioning its origin.

The reader not verſant in ſtudies of this nature will be amazed, perhaps, that I ſhould attempt to prove the ſpurioufneſs of ſo many works which have hitherto been held to be genuine: however, upon this head, I am to inform him, that the learned Ca-

ſaubon

ſaubon affirms, that there were a great number (Sexaginta) of ſpurious books forged by the Heretics. Now if this be true in regard of Heretics, it may be inferred of the Chriſtians, who are acknowledged to have publiſhed many forged writings; and who are taxed by Celſus and Julian with adulterating and even changing the Holy Scriptures. Hence it may be fairly admitted that many Chriſtian writings ſtill paſs current which are in fact ſpurious. Another reaſon which has prevented the diſcovery, was the total darkneſs which has overſpread the world concerning the hereſies which ſprung up during the firſt four centuries among Chriſtians; but theſe, when once accurately known, will, like the ſpear of Ariel, make ancient writings throw off their diſguiſe. I ſhall now proceed to conſider the writings aſcribed to the Apoſtolical Fathers, and point out their true æra to the beſt of my abilities; and that upon principles of which the moſt unlearned can be able to form a ſure judgment. I begin with

IGNATIUS, Biſhop of Antioch.

Of this Apoſtolical Father we have, beſides ſome acknowledged ſpurious writings, ſeven Epiſtles, of which we have two copies; the ſmaller or what are deemed

the

the more genuine, and the larger or interpolated. Indeed the firſt are generally eſteemed to be genuine, or very little interpolated. This appears even to be the opinion of Dr. Prieſtley*. The larger are almoſt univerſally allowed to be interpolated. Though againſt this notion it muſt be admitted, that writings are more generally abridged than enlarged, nevertheleſs there are certain ſentiments inculcated in the larger Epiſtles, and that not once, but *frequently*, as very generally to have induced the idea of theſe Epiſtles having been very conſiderably interpolated. The moſt ſtriking and the moſt repugnant of theſe ſentiments to ignorant laics ſtrikes me to be that of Biſhops being repeatedly declared to ſtand in the ſame relation to Chriſt, as Chriſt does to God: ſo that as Chriſt or the God-Word is *united* to God, or rather not ſeparated from him, the Biſhops may be ſaid not to be ſeparated from the God-Word: or, to uſe the phraſeology of this bleſſed martyr, the Biſhops may be deemed the *rope* that paſſes over the *pulley*, that is, the Holy Ghoſt, which is to draw all mankind to the God-

* See Hiſt. Op. vol. ii. p. 50.

Word,

Word, or the Father. Ignorant laics are not to ſuppoſe, that this notion of making the Holy Spirit (or, as we of the Church of England ſay, the Holy Ghoſt) a *pulley*, is a *jeu d'eſprit* of my own: no, truly, theſe are too ſerious matters for joking. However, ſhould any of them ſuſpect the veracity of the writer, if he can read Greek, I refer him to the ninth Section of the Epiſtle to the Trallians: if he cannot read Greek, I refer him to Lardner's Teſtimonies, article Ignatius, where he will meet this paſſage expounded in Engliſh. This curious notion is found in the ſmaller Epiſtles, which Dr. Prieſtley upon ſecond thoughts (however his ſecond thoughts are generally worſe than his firſt, as I ſhall have farther occaſion to obſerve) imagines to be genuine. After this who will ſay that Dr. Prieſtley is a ſceptic. In comparing their Lordſhips the Biſhops to a *rope*, I profeſs I mean nothing ſeditious, and have not even in my eye the tranſactions in a neighbouring kingdom. Conſidering the cloſe relationſhip which ſubſiſts, according to this Epiſtle, between Biſhops and Chriſt, it is not ſurprizing that ſtaunch polemics, as

Mr. Gib-

Mr. Gibbon calls them, like Biſhops Bull and Horſley, ſhould declare themſelves advocates for the genuineneſs of the larger Epiſtles. Farther, conſidering that the ſame ſentiment is frequently inculcated in the Apoſtolical Conſtitutions, deemed genuine by the learned Dr. Knowles, I am not a little ſurprized how Dr. Prieſtley, or any other divine, ſhould find fault with Biſhop Horſley, *for interfering concerning the election of Members of the Commons Houſe of Parliament*, ſeeing that in both theſe larger Epiſtles and the Apoſtolical Conſtitutions, laics, nay even the lower orders of the clergy, are abſolutely forbidden to do *any thing* without the conſent of the Biſhop: nay, what makes it ſtill more extraordinary, we are taught in the ſmaller Epiſtles, which Dr. Prieſtley admits are genuine, the very ſame doctrine. See Ad Tral. S. 2, 3. Now, if theſe Epiſtles were written within fourſcore years of the Crucifixion, and a very few years indeed after the Apoſtle John, unleſs we acknowledge this ſubjection to be truly Chriſtian, what is the natural inference? Doubtleſs, that the bleſſed martyr lied; for it was impoſſible that he could have forgotten his leſſon ſo ſoon. Is it not

much

much ſafer, therefore, conſidering the wild, abſurd, fantaſtical notions that are propagating throughout the world, namely, of the people thinking they have a right to determine for themſelves upon all ſubjects, to agree with me that theſe Epiſtles, both the larger and ſmaller, are apocryphal. But as ſuch conduct in the clergy might be deemed *trimming*, and as ſuch might be made uſe of as an argument for entirely deſtroying this holy religion, I think I ſhall ſerve Chriſtianity not a little by proving that theſe Epiſtles are altogether ſpurious.

In the Epiſtle to the Trallians, ſect. 10, Ignatius ſays, " But if as ſome who are Atheiſts, that is un- " believers, ſay, that he ſuffered according to *ap-* " *pearance* *." This paſſage evidently alludes to the Marcionite Hereſy, which was not known for thirty years after the martyrdom of Ignatius. There are alſo alluſions to the ſame hereſy in the preceding Section. See alſo Epiſtle to the Epheſians, ſect. 1, and to the Smyrneans, ſect. 5, 6, 7; and perhaps in others too.

* Ει δε ωσπερ τινες αθεοι οντες, τουτεστιν απιστοι, λεγουσιν το δοκειν πεπονθεναι αυτον.

This bleſſed martyr, in his Epiſtles to the Magnetians, mentions Polycarp as being biſhop of Smyrna. Indeed one of his letters is addreſſed to this biſhop and martyr.

For the comfort of Proteſtant bigots I ſhall adduce a few other particulars from thoſe Epiſtles, which are allowed by the orthodox Proteſtants to be genuine *in the main*, if not *entirely* ſo. Being but an ignorant layman, perhaps my readers might ſuſpect that I had miſapprehended what I had read: I ſhall therefore firſt lay before him what Biſhop Horſley has advanced concerning theſe Epiſtles. His Lordſhip ſays, Tracts, p. 122, "The phraſeology of the Longer [Epiſtles] "ſeems accommodated to the Arian notions" [though his Lordſhip is right enough in this, yet his recommending the writings of Euſebius, who was an Arian, evinces that it is not his own, but a borrowed notion, his Lordſhip being utterly ignonorant in what Arianiſm conſiſted]; "that of the "the Shorter is *every where agreeable* to the Catholic "faith;" [that is, it is agreeable to the Catholic faith that nothing ſhould be done without the conſent of the biſhop: I profeſs that it appears to me to be the true *Catholic* faith; and what is more, the true

Chriſtian

Chriſtian faith; but I thank God I am neither a Catholic nor a Chriſtian.] "The Shorter hath the "ſuffrage of the *five firſt* centuries," &c. This is a mere *gratis dictum*, utterly groundleſs: the Fathers appear ſcarcely to have known any thing of theſe Epiſtles, which is one reaſon why they have been ſuſpected. However his Lordſhip ſays, *the phraſeology of the Shorter Epiſtles is every where agreeable to the Catholic faith.* Let us ſee, then, a ſample of this ſame phraſeology that has had the ſuffrage acording to his Lordſhip of the *five firſt* centuries.

In the Epiſtle to the Romans, ſect. 7. Ignatius ſays, "I have no pleaſure in *corruptible* food, nor in the "pleaſures of life: I wiſh for the bread of God, "the heavenly bread, the bread of life, which is the "*fleſh of Jeſus Chriſt*, the Son of God, who was "afterwards born of the ſeed of David; and I wiſh "to drink *the blood of God*, which is *blood incor-* "*ruptible* and life eternal.*" Tranſubſtantiation is

* Ουχ ηδομαι τροφη φθορας, ουδε ηδοναις του βιου τουτου· αρτον θεου θελω, αρτον ουρανιον, αρτον ζωης, ος εστι σαρξ Ιησου Χριστου, του υιου, του θεου, του γενομενου εν υστερω εκ σπερματος Δαβιδ· και πομα θεου θελω το αιμα αυτου, ο εστιν αγαπη αφθαρτος, και αιωνος ζωη, the two laſt words *life eternal* are only in one MS. Ib. ad Rom. ſect. 7.

ſurely a *novel* doctrine! a *corruption* of Chriſtianity!!!

The fact is, that the Lutheran or Calviniſtic doctrine concerning the elements, which *was* the doctrine of the Church of England, is the doctrine of the heretical Neſtorians; that of Dr. Prieſtley and the Unitarians is ſtill more novel, if meant as a *Chriſtian* doctrine; where they diſcovered their notion, except in their own fancies, I proteſt I know not.

In the Epiſtle to the Philadelphians, Sect. 6. Ignatius ſays, "If any one would explain Judaiſm to "you, don't hear him. For it is better to hear Chriſti-"aniſm from a *circumciſed* perſon, than Judaiſm from "an *uncircumciſed* perſon*."

This paſſage is very remarkable, for it evinces a hatred between *Jews* and *Chriſtians* ſtill more violent than that which took place between Chriſtians and unbelieving Hebrews. It beſides aſſures us of a diſtinction between Jews and unbelieving Hebrews; and that perſons might be *Jews* without being *circumciſed*.

* Εαν δε τις Ιουδαϊσμον ερμηνευη υμιν, μη ακουετε αυτου· αμεινον γαρ εστιν παρα ανδρος περιτομην εχοντος χριστιανισμον ακουειν, η παρα ακροβυστου Ιουδαϊσμον.

There

There is a paſſage in the Epiſtle to the Epheſians, ſect. 7. which has gravelled all the commentators, which could only be owing to their ignorance of the ancient opinions which prevailed among Chriſtians: and I deem it an undoubted proof of my having diſcovered the key which unlocks all thoſe difficulties, my being able to elucidate ſuch paſſages; not thoſe which Biſhop Horſley and Dr. Prieſtley have ſplit upon; but alſo thoſe who are ſuperior to a hundred ſuch like index ſcholars, I mean Cotelerius and the Benedictine editors. The paſſage is as follows—Εις ιαλρος εστιν σαρκικος τε και πνευμαλικος, γενητος κ᾽ αγγενητος, εν σαρκι γενομενος θεος, εν θανάλω ζωη αληθίνη*, κ᾽ εκ Μαριας κ᾽ εκ θεου, προτον παθητος κ᾽ τοτε απαθης —expounded thus by Cotelerius: Medicus autem unus eſt et carnalis et ſpiritualis, genitus et ingenitus ſeu factus et non factus, in homine exſiſtens Deus, in morte vita vera, et ex Maria et ex Deo, primum paſſabilis, et tunc impaſſabilis. The true expoſition of the paſſage is this: "There is one phyſician both "corporeal and ſpiritual, being made and not made; "being God in fleſh; being *true life* in corruption;

* Cotelerius writes abſurdly εν αθανάλω ζωη αληθινη.

"being

" being both of Mary and of God; being firſt paſſible " and then impaſſible." Which may be thus explained: " There is one phyſician, *Jeſus Chriſt*, being " made *as to the fleſh*, and not made *as to the God-* " *Word*; being God in fleſh, that is, *incarnate*; being " true life in corruption, that is, being the giver of " true life or immortality though clad in corruptible " fleſh; being both of Mary, *as to the fleſh*, and of " God, as to the God-Word; being firſt paſſible " *before his crucifixion*, and then impaſſible, that is, " after his aſcenſion."

Dr. Prieſtley's expoſition of this paſſage is truly curious: " There is one phyſician, fleſhly and ſpiri- " tual, begotten and *unbegotten*, in the fleſh *made* " God, in immortal life eternal *, both of Mary and " of God, firſt ſuffering and then impaſſible." I have marked in Italics the objectionable phraſeology, which muſt be obvious to the learned or attentive reader. I ſhould never have done were I to comment upon all the abſurdities of the Moderns.

I ſhall now lay before the reader a paſſage from the

* It might be imagined that the Doctor was an Iriſhman: at leaſt if he was an Iriſhman, this would be deemed a bull.

Larger

Larger Epiſtles concerning the pretenſions of eccleſiaſtics, which were there nothing elſe in theſe Epiſtles, would alone be ſufficient to evince that they were not publiſhed before the middle of the fourth century, when the ſons of Conſtantine, who were enthuſiaſts, governed the Roman world, and of courſe, they themſelves, like other fanatics, were governed by wily prieſts. As the paſſage does *not concern the faith,* I ſhall only give an expoſition which the Engliſh reader may depend on for not being overcharged; and I muſt further obſerve to him, that theſe Larger Epiſtles have ſeveral paſſages of the ſame import, perhaps ſome even ſtronger than that which I adduce. I think this remark not uſeleſs, as perhaps theologians might affirm that from a *ſolitary* paſſage, from writings acknowledged to be interpolated, I drew general inferences diſadvantageous to a reſpectable claſs of individuals, as they would ſay. But I truſt that the reader has not forgotten that the paſſage from the Smaller Epiſtles deemed *not* to be interpolated by all true ſons of the Church, which, without entering ſo much into

particulars,

particulars, nevertheleſs *in the main* implies every thing in the following paſſage.

This holy martyr ſays, in the third Section of his Epiſtle to the Magnentians, "Therefore it is fit that "you obey your biſhop, and contradict him in "nothing: it is terrible to contradict ſuch a "perſon: for he does not deceive him who is viſible "[that is the biſhop], but thinks to deceive the invi- "ſible, who cannot be deceived by any. For a cir- "cumſtance of this ſort refers not to man, but to "God: for God ſays to Samuel, *They have not rejected* "*you, but me:* and Moſes ſays, *Your murmurings are* "*not againſt us, but againſt the Lord.* For no one "remained unpuniſhed, who raiſed himſelf againſt "his ſuperiors. For Dathan and Abiron did not "contradict the laws, but Moſes; wherefore they "were precipitated alive to hell: Core, and the two "hundred and fifty who conſpired with him againſt "Aaron, were conſumed by fire. The parricide "Abſalon was hung from a tree, and his evil "deſigning heart pierced with darts. Abeddadan, in "like manner, and for the ſame reaſon, loſt his head.

"Ozias

" Ozias, for having dared to oppoſe prieſts and the " prieſthood, was puniſhed by being made a leper. " Saul, becauſe he would not wait for Samuel, was " diſhonoured *. Wherefore, it becomes you alſo to " venerate your *ſuperiors*." The reader will perceive that this is a leſſon not only for the *lower* ranks in ſociety, but even for *kings*.

In the Smaller Epiſtle to the Trallians, S. 9, it is ſaid, that Jeſus Chriſt was *truly* born, ate, and drank, and was *truly* crucified, &c.; plainly alluding to the Docete hereſy, which, however, did not ſpring up for thirty years after his ſuppoſed martyrdom. Ib. 10 ſection. Ib. ad Smyr. S. 2, &c. &c. In the Larger Epiſtles to the Trallians, S. 6, he ſays, " That there " were ſome who thought that the Father, and Son, " and Holy Spirit, were *the ſame thing*:" alluding to the Sabellian hereſy, which ſprung up about the middle of the third century: he goes on, " and that the " world was not the work of God by the inſtrumen- " tality of Chriſt, but of *ſome other ſtrange power*;" plainly alluding to the Manichean hereſy, which ſprung up about the latter end of the third century.

* His family was deprived of the hereditary ſucceſſion to the throne.

To the Magneſians, ſect. 8, he ſays, "That Jeſus "Chriſt was the Word of God; not a pronounced "word, but *ſubſiſtential*, or having an actual ſubſiſt-"ence:" plainly alluding to the Paulian hereſy, which aroſe about the year 264. Ib. ſect. 6, he ſays, "That "the God-Word was born before time, προ αιωνος. Ib. "ſect. 11, before all time, προ παντων αιωνων;" which ſhews that the writer was acquainted with the Arian hereſy.

To the Philadelphians, ſect. 6, he mentions ſome who ſuppoſed that the God-Word inhabited the human body as the ſoul does other bodies: which ſhews, that the writer compoſed this Epiſtle after Apolinaris had advanced this notion. There being no mention in theſe Epiſtles of the Anima Rationalis, makes me infer, that they were compoſed before the year 374, when determined by the Roman Church to be a component part of Chriſt. Soz. l. vi. c. 25. The curious reader will be much pleaſed by the peruſal of this ſection, ſome of the hereſies being very accurately pointed out in it.

The writer alſo affirms, Ep. ad Trall. ſect. 10. That Jeſus had completed thirty years before he was baptiſed,

tiſed, which is more than Luke ſays; alſo, that he was not crucified till after he had preached the Goſpel *three* years, which was *one* year *more* than Origen ſuppoſed, and *two* years *more* than Tertullian imagined. However, this was the opinion alſo of Euſebius, and of courſe ſtrengthens the ſuppoſition of the author's living in the ſame period.

Perhaps many will conclude from the Macedonian hereſy not been adverted to in the ſixth Section of the Epiſtle to the Philadelphians, that theſe Epiſtles were publiſhed before Macedonius had advanced his heretical notion concerning the Holy Spirit: this I profeſs to be my opinion, if it be a point of any conſequence.

I proceed to the other writings in this collection. The firſt I ſhall conſider, is the Apoſtolical Conſtitutions, *aſcribed* to Clemens Romanus, with which I ſhall join the Apoſtolical Canons, drawn up, *as it is ſaid*, by the ſame Clemens.

Concerning the former, to make uſe of the words of the learned Francis Pagi: "Clemens Romanus is "not the author of theſe Conſtitutions, ſince Euſebius, "lib. iii. c. 15, and Jerome de Scriptoribus Eccle-

" ſiaſticis, where treating of the writings of St. Cle-
" mens, only reckon *one* Epiſtle of his to the Corin-
" thians. Moreover, that Cardinal Humbert, Pope
" Leo the Ninth's Legate at the court of Conſtan-
" tinople, anſwered Nicetas Pectoratus, who was cit-
" ing paſſages from the Apoſtolical Conſtitutions againſt
" faſting on the Sabbath (Sabbatus, Saturday), in theſe
" words—*You* [*Nicetas*] *endeavour to affirm this from*
" *apocryphal books and canons, condemned as ſuch by the*
" *Fathers:* and a little after, *wherefore caſting away*
" *from us every thing apocryphal, we diſdain to liſten to*
" *their fabulous traditions, becauſe they are not as the law*
" *of the Lord.* *Nicetas* had cited the fifth and ſeventh
" books of the Apoſtolical Conſtitutions. From which
" anſwer of Humbert's, Chriſtianus Lupus hath in-
" ferred, that it was the opinion of the Apoſtolical
" See, whoſe Legate or Nuncio Humbert was, that
" the Apoſtolical Conſtitutions are apocryphal;" which
opinion I believe the reader will agree to.

Pagi proceeds—" That with regard to the collection
" which paſſes under the name of the ſame Clemens,
" who is reported to have publiſhed the Apoſtolical
" Canons, in number eighty-five, having collected
" them

" them for the benefit of the faithful into one body.
" That *Peter de Marca* writes, that this was done
" *before* the Council of Nice, and after the year 268.
" The reaſon of the former date is, becauſe the Em-
" peror Conſtantine, in his ſecond letter to Euſebius
" and the people of Antioch, cites the *thirteenth* Canon:
" from whence it is diſcovered, that theſe Canons were
" known *before* the Nicene Council: but that they
" were *poſterior* to the year 268, *he* deduces from this,
" that Firmilian would have cited them, to prove a
" cuſtom which prevailed in the Eaſt, of rejecting the
" baptiſm of heretics, ſince the Canons obviouſly fa-
" voured what he had advanced, did they at that
" time exiſt, for the forty-fifth Canon is thus ex-
" preſſed—*The biſhop, or preſbyter, who will allow the*
" *baptiſm or ſacrifice of heretics, we order him to be de-*
" *poſed. For what agreement has Chriſt with Belial?*
" *or what portion the believer with the unbeliever?* And
" the forty-ſixth Canon—*The biſhop, or the preſbyter,*
" *who will again baptize a perſon who was truly bap-*
" *tized; or who ſhould not baptize him who was pol-*
" *luted by the impious* [that is, who had been baptized
" by heretical Chriſtians], *ſhould be depoſed, as one who*

" *mocks*

" *mocks the death and croſs of the Lord, and diſtinguiſhes*
" *not the true from the falſe prieſts.* When, therefore,
" Firmilian, in his epiſtle written to Cyprian, A. D.
" 268 or 269, contending againſt the baptiſm of
" heretics, and objecting againſt the cuſtom approved
" of by Pope Stephanus, in a manner too ſevere where
" a Chriſtian biſhop was concerned, hath not adduced
" the above-mentioned Canons in ſupport of his opi-
" nion, it may be inferred that the Apoſtolical Canons
" were unknown in that age." Pat. Ap. vol. i. p. 198.

That *Peter de Marca* is juſtified in his inference cannot be diſputed, if what he aſſerts of Conſtantine and Firmilian be well founded. With regard to the latter, the reader can have no doubt, as being demonſtrable from *Firmilian*'s letter to Cyprian. See Part Firſt, Diſq. p. 39. n.

But concerning *Conſtantine*'s letter to Euſebius and the *Antiochenians*, I muſt obſerve, that there is *no* mention in them of *Canons*, but of the *canon* and the *tradition* of the apoſtle, which is mentioned more than once in them. I ſhall farther obſerve, that neither the thirteenth Canon, according to the copy of *Dionyſius Exiguus*, which is the tenth in our copy; nor

the

the thirteenth canon of our copy, which is the seventeenth of *Dionysius's*, could have been cited by *Constantine*, as being utterly irrelevant to his purpose, which was to translate the courtly Eusebius, bishop of Cæsarea, to the see of Antioch, which was then vacant, as its virtuous and orthodox bishop, Eustathius, had been just deposed by means of a conspiracy of prevaricating Arians, of which number was our Eusebius, who procured some abandoned wretch to swear *falsely* (for when asked to point out Eustathius, she did not know his person) a child against him; it being the object of the Arians to place such of their brethren as could prevaricate, in all the great sees. But Constantine was obliged to recede from his purpose, perhaps induced thereto by Eusebius, who was not a man of firm nerve; and who, probably alarmed with what might happen, were he by the Imperial influence elected to that see, where he was held in that esteem which should ever attach to base *time-servers*, might possibly have written to the Emperor that there was an Apostolical Canon or rule, and a tradition, against such translations. The Emperor thereupon

thereupon wrote to the people of Antioch to chooſe whom they would for their biſhop.

Socrates, in ſpeaking of this tranſaction, and who flouriſhed about a century after, denies the exiſtence of any ſuch Canon. Now, had the Apoſtolical Canons been known to Conſtantine *before* the Council of Nice, could they have been unknown to Socrates, who lived a century *after*. However, notwithſtanding what Socrates ſays, it is not clear to me but that at this time ſuch a Canon was in contemplation among the chiefs of the Church; and which had the Church, or the ſucceſſive heads of it, the biſhops of Rome, ſtedfaſtly adhered to, the ſagacious politician, if I ſhall be honoured by the peruſal of ſuch an one, will perceive, that whatever revolutions might take place throughout the world, would have little impeded the progreſs of orthodox Chriſtianity, till it had eſtabliſhed itſelf over every kingdom on the earth; when univerſal peace, and ſubjection to the biſhop of Rome, would have rivetted ghoſtly chains upon all mankind; which, without a miracle, could never have been broken.

What induces me to think that Apoſtolical Canons

were

were even then in contemplation, when the foundation ſtones of orthodox eccleſiaſtical polity were preparing to be laid, is, that Theodoret, in ſpeaking of this tranſaction, obſerves, that *tranſlations* were contrary to eccleſiaſtical law.

Theodoret might be twenty years younger than Socrates, and thoſe Canons known to him as an *eccleſiaſtic* and a biſhop, and not to Socrates who was only a *layman*; for I ſhall ſhortly adduce ample teſtimony with what circumſpection the Orthodox acted, that thoſe writings which contained the ſecrets of the ſect ſhould not be expoſed to the public eye: perhaps the rough handling of thoſe which they had imprudently expoſed by Celſus and Porphyry, had taught them the wiſdom of the ſerpent upon this ſcore. Nor did they publiſh them (if they were ever publiſhed for the general uſe of mankind before the Reformation) till, by firſt feeling the public mind by a partial diſcloſure, they were forewarned of the objections which might be made, and which by a partial omiſſion or alteration they might be able to defend againſt the attacks of every opponent. In no other way I apprehend can the alterations in ſome paſſages of the New

Teſtament be accounted for. It may be even affirmed, that the Roman church, by acknowledging Jerome's verſion of the New Teſtament, did not act with its uſual caution: had this tranſlation been made ſomewhat later, *the Word being made fleſh*, in the firſt chapter fourteenth verſe of St. John's Goſpel, would doubtleſs have been altered to ſome other phraſeology, which the Eutychians could not have taken advantage of. And an important *not*, which *now* appears in our copies of the Epiſtle to the Romans, ch. 5, v. 14, would not have been allowed *at all* to be noticed in Jerome's verſion, had the Cæleſtian hereſy, which denied that the ſin of Adam attached to his poſterity, been propounded ſomewhat earlier; which this text, as we find it in the more ancient Latin Fathers and Origen without the *negative*, evidently ſupports. See Semler's Diſſ. in Tert.

But to return to Euſebius and Conſtantine, from a digreſſion which, though it ſtrikes me as appoſite, will moſt likely be condemned. I ſay then, that from the complexion of the whole tranſaction, as it appears in the writings of this prevaricating biſhop, that the ſagacious reader will be ſatisfied, that Euſebius himſelf

had

had been the underhand inciter of Conſtantine in the attempt of placing him in the ſee of Antioch; from which his cowardice made him recede, perceiving how thoroughly he was deteſted by the orthodox Chriſtians at Antioch. To impute his actions to praiſe-worthy motives, would be doing him too much honour. Perhaps, ſome may think, that I have taken an unreaſonable prejudice againſt Euſebius, who is thought much of by the moderns: and for this reaſon only, as if from a ſpirit of contradiction. But upon this head I appeal to the ingenuous. That he prevaricated is clear from his hiſtory's being admired by the Arians, though the work of a biſhop of the eſtabliſhed Orthodoxy. His baſeneſs, to ſay nothing worſe, is evinced by his entering into a conſpiracy with *Euſebius* biſhop of Nicomedia, and *Theognis* biſhop of Nicæa, the two apparent leaders of the Arian faction, againſt the worthy *Euſtathius*, biſhop of Antioch. His regard for religion, by ſuborning an infamous wretch whom he countenanced to perjure herſelf—to ſay nothing of a ſimilar matter concerning St. Athanaſius's cutting off a man's arm, though the man was produced in court with his two arms. When theſe things are conſidered, and Pothinus's taxing him to his face of having prevaricated,

ricated, I hope, as I have obſerved, that the honeſt and ingenuous readers will acquit me of any undue prepoſſeſſion againſt this eccleſiaſtic. Perhaps even the modern Orthodox will not readily take up the cauſe of a perſon more than ſuſpected by his contemporaries, who muſt be allowed to have been the beſt judges, both of his opinions and actions. I profeſs I can bring no proof of his having refuſed, from cowardly motives, to be ſupported by the Imperial intereſt for to be elected to fill the ſee of Antioch. But in this I ſubmit to the learned reader, who has attentively peruſed the hiſtory of the tranſaction in the hiſtories of Euſebius himſelf, Socrates and Sozomen. His prevaricating in a time of perſecution, is however a proof of his not poſſeſſing a firm nerve: or that Chriſtianity, in his opinion, was a deluſion. One word more: I ſcruple not to affirm, that Conſtantine's letter to Euſebius, in his Life of Conſtantine, l. iii. c. 61, is a forgery. For whatever the Emperor's private character might be, I ſhall never readily believe, that a ſoldier between fifty and ſixty years of age can be capable of aſſerting a notorious untruth; which the letter in Euſebius evidently does: for in it Conſtantine ſays, "That even "in this you ought to eſteem yourſelf, that in the

"opinion

" opinion of *all the world* you were deemed worthy to " be biſhop of the univerſal church. For it ought " doubtleſs to add to your happineſs, that all ſhould " be ambitious of having you to be their biſhop." This is a truly modeſt paſſage for Euſebius himſelf to inſert in his hiſtory. However, it is totally unfounded: for, except by Arians, he was deſpiſed by other Chriſtians; but particularly odious to the Antiochenians: chiefly perhaps on account of his having been one of the conſpirators againſt their late worthy biſhop. Again, wherefore ſhould the Emperor write to the Antiochenians not to chooſe Euſebius for their biſhop: were he even elected, it depended on himſelf whether he ſhould accept it. The reader will obſerve, that the Life of Conſtantine did not appear for many years after the death of both Conſtantine and Euſebius; and that perhaps it has ſuffered conſiderably from *Arian* management. As we have it, it is a diſgrace to his memory.

I cannot help cenſuring here the learned *Francis Pagi* and *Le Clerc*. The firſt, for citing an obſervation from *Peter de Marca*, which he muſt know to have been unfounded; namely, that *Conſtantine*, in his letter to *Euſebius* and the people of Antioch, had

cited

cited the 13th of the Apoſtolical Canons: and Le Clerc, for inſerting, in his amended edition of Cotelerius's edition of the Patres Apoſtolici, the *judicium* of Francis Pagi, which contains this unfounded obſervation, without ever cenſuring *Pagi*'s management: for the reader will perceive that Pagi does not ſay, *as from himſelf*, that *Conſtantine* had mentioned the 13th Canon in his letter, but that *de Marca* ſays *that Conſtantine cited it.*

Before I had conſulted Euſebius, I entertained no doubt of the *management* of Pagi: for perhaps in the whole collection, which conſiſts of eighty-five Canons, there is not one among them more difficult to expound: I therefore was certain from Cotelerius's ſeeking no aid towards helping him to the true underſtanding of it from theſe epiſtles of Conſtantine, that there was not even an alluſion to it in them. Cotelerius was too capital a writer to be guilty of ſuch oſcitancy. However, as he himſelf has, I apprehend, erroneouſly expounded this *Canon*, I ſhall lay it before my readers as in the original—in his expoſition—an expoſition in Engliſh—and then the expoſition of Dionyſius Exiguus. My object in laying before the learned ſo many expoſitions, is to

ſatisfy

satisfy them concerning my having discovered the true key which will unlock almost all the difficulties to be met with in the Fathers: for, that a person of the little knowledge which I possess of the Greek tongue should be able satisfactorily to remove difficulties, and that without any extraordinary application, that have baffled the first scholars, can be resolved upon no other principle.

Ει τις κληρικος, η λαικος, αφωρισμενος, ηΐοι δεκΐος, απελθων εις ετερα πολει δεχθη ανευ γραμματων συστατικων, αφωριζεσθωσαν οι δεξαμενοι κ̀ ο δεχθεις. Ει δε αφωρισμενος η, επιτεινεσθω αυΐω ο αφορισμος, ως ψευσαμενω κ̀ απατησαντι εκκλησιαν θεϋ.

Si quis Clericus, aut Laicus, segregatus vel nonreceptus [Cotelerius reads αδεκτος erroneously: Dionysius Exiguus read δεκτος] abiens ad aliam civitatem, sine literis commendaticiis receptus fuerit; segregentur qui receperunt, et qui receptus est. Si autem fuerit segregatus, prorogetur ei segregatio, ut qui verbis fefellerit ac deceperit Ecclesiam Dei.

" If any ecclesiastic, or laic, suspended from com-
" munion, or a communicant going into another city,
" should be received [to communion] without recom-
" mendatory letters, they who received him, and he
" who

" who was received, ſhall be ſuſpended: but if he was a " ſuſpended perſon, he ſhall be excommunicated, as " one who lied, and deceived the church of God." This expoſition is very plain, and correſponds with fact. For Chriſtians, in thoſe ages, had not the privilege of being admitted to the Chriſtian Myſteries in other congregations, without bringing with them letters certifying their ſoundneſs in the faith; for otherwiſe, wolves in ſheep's clothing would frequently gain admittance, which might afterwards enable them to turn Chriſtians into ridicule. Nor were Catechumens themſelves permitted to be preſent at the Myſteries: the doors were equally ſhut againſt them, as againſt any others. Neither was it ſuch an eaſy matter to be made a Chriſtian in theſe ages as is generally imagined. In ordinary caſes, a *three months faſt* was indiſpenſable: which, however, might be ſhortened according to the zeal evinced by the Catechumen, ſuch as a devotee converting her huſband, or children, and *vice verſa*.

I had like to have forgotten Dionyſius Exiguus's expoſition. Si quis Clericus, aut Laicus, a communione ſuſpenſus ſeu communicans, ad aliam properet civitatem,

civitatem, et ſuſcipiatur præter commendaticias literas; et qui ſuſceperunt, et qui ſuſceptus eſt, communione priventur. Excommunicato verò proteletur ipſa correptio, tanquam qui mentitus ſit, et eccleſiam Dei ſeduxerit.

After what muſt be deemed a long digreſſion, I return to my proper object, that of fixing the date of theſe writings; namely the Apoſtolical Conſtitutions, and Apoſtolical Canons; firſt premiſing, that it is not to be imagined, that writings, which perhaps were in ſpeculation, and hatching for upwards of a century before they were publiſhed, even among eccleſiaſtics—that were beſides drawn up by the ableſt, and, it may be, the ſhrewdeſt men that ever exiſted; namely, the biſhops of Rome and Alexandria, and their reſpective preſbyters—ſhould not be more guarded, and have fewer unguarded paſſages, than the work of any ſingle writer, who ſhould attempt to paſs any ſpurious works on the world. Therefore, though I am inclined to think that there will be found in them fewer paſſages indicative of a later age than that of the Apoſtles, or of ſpurioufneſs, which ſhould be aſcribed to this cauſe, and alſo to the nature of

the ſubjects, which is chiefly employed in giving inſtructions: yet the age of the *Conſtitutions* may, I think, be nearly inveſtigated.

The following paſſage, methinks, plainly alludes to the Arians, and even to the later Arians, or Eunomians. "Thou (O God) who broughteſt forth *out* "*of nothing* (εκ του μη ονλος) all things into being, by "means of thy only begotten Son, who *by thy will*, "(βουλησει) and power, and goodneſs didſt beget "him without any medium, the only begotten "Son, &c. *before all time*," αιων. Lib. viii. c. 12. p. 403.

P. 404, ſame book and chapter, there is another evident alluſion to the Arians. "Therefore you "made him (man) of an immortal ſoul and diſſipable "body: the former indeed made out of nothing; "but the latter from the four elements: and thou "gaveſt his ſoul the faculty of *rational diſcernment* to "diſtinguiſh righteouſneſs from unrighteouſneſs, "and juſtice from injuſtice."

There are ſome of the Conſtitutions which refer to facts, and which will tend materially towards fixing their age.

In

In the 6th chapter and fourth book it is ſaid, "That thoſe who afflict the widow and oppreſs the "orphan, and fill the priſons with innocent people, "or who maltreat their domeſtics by blows, hunger, "or hard labour, or *who lay waſte cities*, ſuch, O "biſhop, are to be ſhunned by you, their offerings "are accurſed." *Laying waſte cities*, perhaps alludes to the maſſacre committed at Theſſalonica: for which the Emperor Theodoſius the Great was obliged to do penance.

Lib. viii. c. 33. Slaves are ordered to work five days only, and to keep holy the Sabbath (Saturday), and the Lord's-day (Sunday). The twenty-ninth Canon, aſcribed to the Council of Laodicea, held the Lord knows when, and which forbids the Sabbath (Saturday) to be kept holy, may therefore be deemed ſpurious. Indeed, without this, the learned not being agreed concerning the time of the holding of this Council; ſome placing it *before* the Council of Nice, others ſixty years *later*; alone evinces that there was no ſuch Council. Its being mentioned by the lying Theodoret does not add a whit to the probability of its

reality. See Lard. vol. iv. p. 308, form. ed. vol. viii. p. 289. Pat. Ap. n. 16.

That these Constitutions were not published till after the Exposition of the Scriptures made by Jerome by order of Pope Damasus, who died in the year 384 after having governed the Church eighteen years, may be fairly inferred from their ordaining that Christians should abstain from meats offered to idols—from blood—from *things strangled*; for, from Primasius, author of Praedestinatus, who flourished in the middle of the fourth century, we know that *things strangled* had not been admitted into the Latin copies of the New Testament, and was held by the Latin Fathers to be a Greek interpolation*. So that the date of the Apostolical Constitutions may be placed between Jerome's Exposition of the Scriptures, and the prohibiting the Sabbath to be kept holy by Christians.

With regard to the Apostolical Canons, we may be certain they were unknown at the time that Firmilian wrote to Cyprian, A. D. 268, or 269, as already observed. But at what time *after* that

* See Semler's Diss. in Tert. vol. v. p. 244.

period

period thoſe fifty mentioned by Dionyſius Exiguus, and of which he has given an Expoſition, might have firſt appeared, I profeſs that I am not ſufficiently verſed in the *rites* of the Church to determine. But the forty-three which follow, I am inclined to think, from their ordaining, that a biſhop ſhould be cited by two biſhops when impleaded and did not appear, as was done by Cyril in regard of Neſtorius, muſt have been publiſhed *prior* to that tranſaction. Perhaps the Apoſtolical Conſtitutions, and the firſt fifty of the Apoſtolical Canons appeared pretty much about the ſame time. The ſubſequent Canons might be the fruits of the Pelagian and Celeſtian hereſies; which cauſed great troubles in the Church, and which preceded, only by a few years, that of Neſtorius.

I ſhall now lay before the Reader ſome extracts from the Apoſtolical Conſtitutions, and Apoſtolical Canons.

Lib. i. c. 6. Chriſtians are ordered to abſtain from Heathen books.

—— ii. c. 1. Biſhops were not to be younger than *fifty*. This Canon was never obſerved.

Lib.

Lib. ii. c. 25. Biſhops are informed in what manner tythes and firſt fruits ought to be made uſe of: namely, in the relief of the diſtreſſed: that is, the poor, the orphans, the widows, the afflicted (perhaps the ſick), and the ſtranger in want [how humane and conſiderate]; and the *moderate* maintenance of the biſhops.

——— c. 33. Abſolution by biſhops expreſsly maintained.

——— c. 57. Churches were to be built Eaſt and Weſt. The Chriſtians had, I apprehend, no churches before the third century. Deacons diſtributed the ſacramental elements. I apprehend they dare not now lay their finger on them.

——— c. 63. Idleneſs prohibited among Eccleſiaſtics; that is, preſbyters and deacons. They were enjoined to purſue ſome ſecular profeſſion; not only to ſupport themſelves, and not be like drones, a burthen upon the revenues of the church, which were intended for the relief of the poor, &c. but that they

might

might be enabled to contribute themſelves to the ſame end. It is ſtrange, paſſing ſtrange! that our Eccleſiaſtics, ſuch as Dr. Knowles, &c. ſhould be trumping up Apoſtolical Conſtitutions and Canons of trifling import, and ſhould not produce ſuch as theſe which do the ancient Catholics ſo much honour. Though perhaps ſome will think it is not ſo ſtrange. This chapter deſerves to be written in letters of gold. The Apoſtles in it are made to ſay, "Were not ſome "of us fiſhers," others "mechanics," others "huſbandmen," but none of us "idlers;" and then, after citing Proverbs vi. 6, and xii. 11, and xix. 24, and Eccleſ. iv. 5, and x. 18, they conclude with ſaying, *if any would not work, neither ſhould he eat*, alluding to Theſſ. iii. 10.

What effrontery then have churchmen, namely, rectors, vicars, and deacons, to claim a divine right to tythes and firſt fruits. By advancing ſuch a right they avow themſelves to be the *defrauders* of the helpleſs orphan, of the afflicted widow, of the unprotected

ſtranger,

ſtranger, of the indigent ſuffering from want and diſeaſe.

Lib. iii. c. 15. Deaconeſſes choſen to avoid the ſcandal which the ſending young deacons to the houſes of the faithful might give birth to among ſcoffers. They were beſides neceſſary for oiling the women after baptiſm: their boſoms I think: deacons were only allowed to oil their foreheads.

Lib. vi. c. 26. The reader will find an alluſion to the Sabellian hereſy.

Lib. vii. c. 41. There is an alluſion to the Arian hereſy.

Lib. viii. c. 12, 14. The ſacramental elements, the *real body and blood* of Chriſt.

——— c. 32. Catechumens were in general ſubject to a *three* years diſcipline before they were baptized.

Apoſtolical Canons.

Canon 59. ſays, "If any perſon force a virgin "not betrothed, let him be ſuſpended" [that is, not be permitted to partake of the holy myſteries, as the Lord's Supper, &c.]; "but it may not be lawful for "him

" him to take another, but let him retain her whom " he hath choſen, *however poor ſhe may be.*" Perhaps ſuch a regulation at this day, would not be attended with bad conſequences. In the ſtikometry or catalogue of the books contained in the New and Old Teſtaments in the ſeventy ſixth Canon; among them are reckoned the *two* Epiſtles of Clemens to the Corinthians, the Apoſtolical Conſtitutions, the Apoſtolical Canons, or as they are called, *the Acts of* us *the Apoſtles.* They however omit the Revelations, which the ſpurious decree of the council of Laodicea likewiſe omits. Hence it appears, that our New Teſtament differs very materially from that of thoſe days.

I proceed to thoſe other ſpurious books aſcribed to the ſame *Clemens*, which are contained in this collection of Cotelerius, namely, the *Recognitions*, the *Clementines*, and the *Acts of Peter*, or the *Clementine Epitome*; concerning which, I apprehend the modern Engliſh writers have evinced but a ſmall portion of critical acumen; which can only be imputed to their giving opinions of books which they had never pe-

ruſed, or in ſo ſuperficial a manner, as ſhould have deterred them from ſpeaking at all of them.

Beſides the two Epiſtles to the *Corinthians*, aſcribed by ſome of the antients to *Clemens*, the latter of which is pronounced by the judicious *Photius* to be ſpurious, as it undoubtedly is, as well as the firſt, and the Apoſtolical Conſtitutions, and Apoſtolical Canons; they alſo mention other works of his, ſuch as the *Periodos*, or travels by Origen, called by *Athanaſius* and *Epiphanius*, the *Travels of Peter*, which *Athanaſius* farther obſerves to be *partly inſpired*, which *parts* are alſo ſaid by him to have been read in Chriſtian Aſſemblies. Alſo the *Acts of Peter*, the Goſpel of Peter, the preaching of Peter, and the Revelation of Peter *, as alſo *the Dialogue of Peter and Apion*. The queſtion firſt to be conſidered is, which, and how many of thoſe books

* Rufinus's verſion is "the Goſpel of Peter, but which is alſo called "his preaching or Revelation," which I believe is right, though Jerome makes them different works, and even reckons them as ſuch. But Jerome was a haſty inaccurate writer, and even admitting him to be otherwiſe, he cannot be held to be of equal authority concerning theſe ſpurious writings aſcribed to *Clemens*, as *Rufinus* who had tranſlated them, and who of courſe muſt have paid particular attention to them.

actually

actually exiſt, and the age of each: and ſecondly, if each work can *with good reaſon* be diſtinguiſhed from thoſe others with which they are now confounded under one appellation.

Firſt, then, I entertain no doubt whatever that the *Recognitions*, of which we have now only an expoſition by *Rufinus*, who flouriſhed towards the cloſe of the fourth century, contain the Goſpel of Peter, *alias* the Preachings of Peter, *alias* the Revelation of Peter and the Acts of Peter—and the Periodos or Travels of Peter. Farther, that the Clementines are an epitome not only of theſe three ſeparate writings, but alſo contain the moſt material parts of the judgment of Peter noticed by Jerome. Alſo that the Acts of Peter or Clementine Epitome is the pragmateia of Photius, of which he has given a very poor character; but which has been applied by the moſt infatuated moderns to the Praxeis or ſecond and third books of the Recognitions: of which Praxeis, however, *the ſame Photius, in the two or three preceding lines, had given a very high character*. That a learned and judicious ancient ſhould be guilty of ſuch palpable oſcitancy would ſurprize me: though I confeſs it would

not ſurprize me in a modern Engliſh Proteſtant. This fact did not eſcape the learned Hoeſchelius, who flouriſhed a century and a half ago, and which is mentioned in the very firſt note upon this work. Though being unacquainted with the writings of this writer, and of courſe having no knowledge of the reaſons which had induced him to form his opinion, and which I doubt not were very different from thoſe which I ſhall lay before the reader, and influence my judgment, nevertheleſs I truſt that theſe will be found of ſufficient weight to ſatisfy the learned and ingenuous. But to proceed regularly.

The firſt book, then, of the Recognitions contains the Goſpel, or Preaching, or Revelation of Peter. That it was very properly deſignated by the two firſt of theſe appellations is very evident, for of ſeventy-four ſections which are contained in this book, forty-eight to a few lines are employed in recording a ſpeech of Peter's to Clemens, which may properly enough be called his Goſpel alſo, and not improperly his Revelation; for in it he gives Clemens an account of the riſe and progreſs of the Goſpel to that day, and certainly mentions ſeveral things which, as not being

contained

contained in the ſacred books of the Old Teſtament, he could only come to the knowledge of by preternatural means. Now, that this firſt book does not connect, with thoſe which follow, is evident from its mentioning that the ſeventh year ſince the crucifixion had been then *completed*, ſee ſect. 43: whereas in the twenty-ninth ſection of the ninth book we are informed, that the ſeventh year was *yet current*.

That the *Praxeis*, or Acts of Peter, which I preſume to be contained in the ſecond and third books of the Recognitions, may be alſo reaſonably inferred from holy oil being mentioned, lib. 3, ſect. 67, where ſpeaking of baptiſm: whereas in the firſt book or preachings of Peter there is no mention of holy oil when ſpeaking of baptiſm; ſee ſect. 48. Nor in the laſt ſeven books, which I alſo preſume to be the Periodos of Origen and the Travels of Peter mentioned by Athanaſius and Epiphanius. Theſe are differences of ſuch a nature as neceſſarily point out different authors for theſe pieces.

That the *Periodos* is the earlieſt of theſe writings may be fairly inferred from the ſilence of Origen concerning the others: but farther, in the firſt

book

book of the Recognitions, or the Preachings of Peter, there is a manifeſt alluſion to the Manichean hereſy in theſe words: *Virtutem ſummam excelſi Dei quæ ſit* ſupra *conditorem mundi*, ſect. 72: as alſo in the twelfth ſection of the ſecond book, or the Praxeis, in theſe words: *Virtutem aſſe quendam, quæ ſit* ſupra *conditorem Deum*. But as the Manichean hereſy did not ſpring up for about twenty years after Origen, it is evident that he could not mention books which exiſted not in his time.

Farther, in the laſt ſection of the third book of the Recognitions the author recapitulates the heads of the different ſubjects upon which he had deſcanted, which were in number *ten:* yet, among them, he has taken no notice of any thing contained in the firſt book of the Recognitions, which comprehends as much matter as the one half of theſe ten books. Surely there cannot be a ſtronger proof of the firſt book not belonging to the two following. And that the *Periodos*, or the ſeven laſt books of the Recognitions, does not belong to the ſecond and third books of the Recognitions, is evident from the author's recapitulating the contents of what he had treated upon

upon at the end of the third book; but there is no recapitulation of any ſort in the ſubſequent ſeven books, which ſhould at leaſt be expected, when the author was ſo partial to recapitulations as to draw up one after writing what is now contained in two not very long books. He farther informs us, that he had ſent them, namely, the ten tracts which he had juſt enumerated, written by the order of Peter to James; which evinces that they muſt have been ſent ſeparately, and at a different time from the Periodos or Travels of Peter.

I truſt, then, that it is evinced to the ſatisfaction of the reader, that the Recognitions comprehend three ſeparate tracts, from two of them containing manifeſt alluſions to the Manichean hereſy, namely, the firſt book of the Recognitions or the Preachings of Peter, and th Praxeis; and that this laſt, or ſecond and third books of the Recognitions, is a different work from the firſt book and ſeven laſt books of the Recognitions, from mention being made in it of holy oil, about which the two others are ſilent; and that the firſt and ſeven laſt books are different works, from its being mentioned in the firſt, that the

ſeventh

ſeventh year *ſince* the crucifixion was *completed:* whereas in the ſeven laſt books it is ſaid, that the ſeventh year was ſtill *current.*

Farther, that the ſeven laſt books are the *Periodos* of Origen is evident from the diſcourſe about Fate, which he mentions being contained in it. For though there is a ſimilar diſcourſe about Fate in the Clementines, yet it is evident that it is taken from the Periodos. For that the Clementines were not only moulded upon the books contained in the Recognitions, but alſo upon theſe other ſpurious books, namely, the *Dialogue between Peter and Apion,* and the *Judgment of Peter,* is evinced by the following reaſons. Firſt, the ſubjects deſcanted upon in the ten books of the Recognitions are all noticed in the Clementines; but the ſubjects of each of the treatiſes in the Recognitions, which I have ſuppoſed to be *three,* are not deſcanted upon connectedly and together, but are ſcattered here and there in the Clementines, as the compiler thought fit.

The learned reader perhaps may think that I have committed an overſight in ſaying that the Clementines contain the Dialogue between Peter and Apion;

when

when in fact there is no ſuch treatiſe contained in it. But if there be not, there is another Dialogue, that between Clemens and Apion, which doubtleſs muſt be that between Peter and Apion mentioned by Euſebius and Jerome: the former being a ſlovenly writer*, might have cited from memory, and the other, being a haſty writer, might have copied him. But be theſe conjectures as they may, unleſs this Dialogue be the ſame as that mentioned by Euſebius and Jerome, it is not noticed by any of the Fathers. Neither am I quite ſingular in this conjecture, for *Nicephorus Calliſti*, who flouriſhed in the fourteenth century, ſuſpected the Clementines to be this Dialogue; which might very well give a title to the work, for the Dialogue employs nineteen ſections of the twenty-five contained in the fourth Homily—all the fifth Homily, containing thirty ſections, and twenty-five out of twenty-ſix ſections contained in the ſixth Homily. That the Clementines and the Dialogue between Peter and Apion, are the ſame work, may be inferred from the manner in which Euſebius expreſſes himſelf concerning them: his

* See Lardner, Article Euſebius.

words are, "Some perſons have lately (χθες κ᾽ πρωην) "publiſhed other verboſe and tedious writings, as if of "Clemens, containing Dialogues between Peter and "Apion of which, ων;" his terms are all in the plural number, which ſeems to imply a work containing more than one treatiſe. If it then be admitted, for thoſe ſeveral reaſons, that the Dialogue between Clemens and Apion be the ſame as the Clementines, what ſhall we think of the judgment of thoſe celebrated Moderns, particularly Dr. Prieſtley, who is laviſh in his praiſes of a treatiſe, which the Ancients thought little of: but the fact is, that the Doctor by miſtaking the *Clementines* for the *Praxeis* of Photius has aſcribed to the former thoſe praiſes, which Photius very deſervedly beſtowed on the latter. That Dr. Prieſtley has only copied Photius, will be evident to any perſon who will be at the trouble of comparing what Photius has ſaid concerning the *Praxeis*, with what Dr. Prieſtley has ſaid of the *Clementines* in his Hiſtory of Opinions. As I think there can remain no doubt, from what has been already ſaid, that the Clementines having had the Recognitions or the writings which are comprehended in this treatiſe as its ground work, it will of courſe be expected that

whatever

whatever alluſions to opinions indicative of a late date, found in the Recognitions, ſhould be alſo diſcoverable in the other. Thoſe paſſages alluding to the Manichean Hereſy, in the firſt and ſecond books of the Recognitions are theſe which ſeem to infer the lateſt date. In the Clementines there is a like alluſion to the ſame hereſy in theſe words: *Atque ſi eſt aliquis alius* SUPER *Conditorem.* However as the knowledge of the ancient opinions among the Heretics, is ſo entirely unknown, it may be ſaid that in founding arguments upon them, I do not ſubject myſelf to be contradicted, as no one ſeems to know any thing of the matter. To this objection I can only reply, that as I have clearly laid down the eſſence of each heretical opinion, long before the penning theſe latter ſheets, as obſerved p. 259, it follows, that my theory being applied, and ſtanding the teſt, is a ſtrong argument for its validity. However, in the eleventh Homily, 10th Section of the Clementines, there is a manifeſt alluſion to a very great dearth and peſtilence at that time raging, which perhaps may be thoſe mentioned by Mr. Gibbon as ravaging the world about the time of the Emperor Claudius, in

a more violent degree than any that had ever before been recorded, and which continued to rage for ſome time. This is ſo near the time uſually aſcribed for the riſe of the Manichean Hereſy, that it muſt be held to be a corroborating argument in favour of what has been already adduced. The truth concerning theſe writings aſcribed to Clemens appears to be this. The author of the Clementines perceiving how inartificially the Recognitions, which had for a ground work three of theſe writings, were drawn up, perhaps little more than tagged together by means of prefaces and tail-pieces, determined to unite into one work all thoſe ſpurious pieces with the greateſt appearance of probability, and inſerted therein his own piece containing the Dialogue between Peter and Apion.

To proceed to the Clementine Epitome. In the ſixty ſecond ſection there is an obvious alluſion to the Pelagian hereſy. In ſections 149, and 150, under the character of Clemens, the author clearly paints that of Nectarius biſhop of Conſtantinople, who died A. D. 397. The Holy Ghoſt being made to proceed from the Father alone, which was the opinion of many of the Orthodox of the latter end of the fourth century,

tury, and perhaps might have been the moſt general opinion among the Orthodox (the Arian opinion was, that he was made by the Son) plainly mark the date of this writing to be about the year 400.

Farther, the term Patriarch, which was introduced among Chriſtian Biſhops towards the cloſe of the fourth century, and which we meet with in this tract, alſo evinces this to be its true date. Perhaps it may be thought unfair that I ſhonld found an argument on this term, and omit doing the ſame on the term archbiſhop, which is to be met with in the preachings, as militating againſt my hypotheſis. But the fact is, if this book be the ſame with that mentioned by Euſebius and Jerome, by the title of the *Preachings of Peter*, it is evident that the title archbiſhop, being unknown in the time of the former, muſt be either the compiler's or Rufinus's.

We may place the date of the Clementines about a century earlier. The Praxeis and Preaching ten or twelve years before the Clementines: the Periodos, or the groundwork of the ſeven laſt books of the Recognitions, about the year 250, there being a plain alluſion in the thirty-ſixth ſection of the fourth book to the hereſy

concerning

concerning the Subſiſtences, which was firſt propounded by Sabellius.

I ſhall now lay before the reader ſome opinions from theſe books.

Lib. i. Sect. 33, 34, 45, and 52, in which the pre-exiſtence of Chriſt is plainly taught, in the laſt his eternal pre-exiſtence, plainly evinces that the preachings of Peter was not an Ebionite production, for the Ebionites denied univerſally his pre-exiſtence.

Lib. i. Sect. 48, informs us, that there was no prophet after Jeſus. What are we then to think of Biſhop Horſley affirming that the Apoſtles wrote *proleptically:* of St. Paul's prophecies, and plain alluſions to the Docete Hereſy: and laſtly, of the Revelations of St. John. Methinks that Peter did not know of theſe writings.

—— Sect. 52, teaches that thoſe juſt men, who lived before Chriſt, would be ſaved. In lib. ii. ſect. 17, the ſame doctrine, I think, is maintained.

Lib. ii. Sect. 17. Chriſt the *Maker* of the world.

The

The Praxeis, therefore, not an Ebionite production.

Lib. ii. Sect. 42, teaches that God had placed every nation under the tutelage of a ſuperintending angel, Deut. xxii. 8. as cited by Clemens Romanus, in his firſt Epiſtle to the Corinthians, who taught the ſame thing, but not as it appears in our preſent copies: in Clemens we read it thus: "When the Moſt High "divided the nations, when he ſeparated "the ſons of Adam, he ſet the bounds of "the nations according to the number of the "angels: his people Jacob was made the por-"tion of the Lord, &c." In our copy there is not a word of angels, nor in the Latin Bible publiſhed at Paris 1741, and as the preface ſays from that verbatim, which is approved in the Church of Rome: ſo that it appears that both Proteſtants, and the modern Catholics, are better judges of the true lections of Scripture than St. Clemens, whom both ſects allow to have been the writer of this Epiſtle, and alſo to have been

the

the favourite diſciple of the bleſſed Paul. I do not find that in Boſs's Greek Bible here is any other lection to authoriſe ſuch a groſs departure from the original. However our rendering is agreeable to the Nazarene expoſition, which it ſeems is now adopted by all Chriſtian ſects, though denied to be the juſt rendering by Juſtin Martyr and the Chriſtians of his time, who adhered to the Septuagint Expoſition, which is no other than a Chriſtian forgery; and which informs us, that God *ſet the bounds of the nations according to the number of the angels* of God: *of God* is ſtill more than what Clemens ſays; and farther evinces, that the Chriſtians were perpetually altering their ſacred books. I ſhall in my next volume prove this Juſtin, that holy and good man, according to Mr. Lindſey, to be a ſhameleſs liar; in which opinion I find myſelf ſupported by the ingenious Mr. Semler. But to ſay the truth, no ſuch perſon ever exiſted, his name was prefixed to writings fabricated for the baſeſt

baſeſt purpoſes by the Chriſtian Church; and which did not appear till towards the cloſe of the third century. Daniel, x. 13. ſpeaks of the Prince of the kingdom of Perſia, which it is evident from the context, was its Guardian Angel. Dial. cum Tryphone Judæo, p. 131.

Lib. ii. Sect. 68. Simon the Magician, who in fact was a Jew *, or, as I think, a *true Diſciple* of Jeſus, aſſerts *one* heaven; Peter inſiſts upon *two*, the viſible firmament, and the inviſible firmament. St. Paul, however, has improved upon Peter, for he aſſerts *three* heavens at the leaſt.

—— Sect. 71. teaches that Baptiſm expelled the *latent* dæmons, or devils, which muſt ever be within thoſe perſons who had partaken of things (ſacrifices) offered to idols. Vid. Lib. iv. S. xvi. 19.

This ſingle paſſage utterly overthrows what the ingenious Mr. Farmer has advanced concerning the

* L. 3. S. 49.

dæmoniacs of the New Teſtament; whoſe notions, though militating againſt ten thouſand paſſages in the Fathers, are adopted, and *even taught from the deſk*, by our Unitarian teachers. Lardner, I think, contends for the honour of being the *ſagacious* diſcoverer. For ſurely ſagacity may be properly predicated of *that* man who diſcovers what his authorities never dreamt of.

In the preceding ſection it is obſerved, that in conſequence of ſome blaſphemous expreſſions of Simon's, that the aſſembly was greatly moved; inſomuch that, on account of the ſedition, it was impoſſible to continue the diſcuſſion: when Peter going to retire, as if on account of the blaſphemy, might ſeem to be conquered: ſtopped, and began more vehemently to confute Simon. The author proceeds:

"Then the people, enraged, forced Simon out of "the aſſembly, accompanied with a ſingle com- "panion: when ſilence being made, Peter thus "addreſſed the people: Brethren, you ought to "bear with wicked men; ſince you know that God "when he could deſtroy them, nevertheleſs ſuffers

"them

" them to continue to the appointed day, in the
" which judgment will be paſſed on all: wherefore
" then ſhould we not bear with thoſe whom God
" bears with? Why ſhould we not ſupport with
" fortitude the injuries which we receive from them,
" when he who is all-powerful avenges not his
" own? that ſo his goodneſs, and their impiety,
" may be made known. But if the Evil One * had
" not diſcovered Simon to be a fit inſtrument, he
" would doubtleſs have diſcovered another: *For it*
" *needs muſt be that offences come, but woe unto that*
" *man by whom they come.* Therefore, Simon is ra-
" rather to be pitied, that he is the veſſel choſen
" by the Evil One, which he would not at all have
" been, were it not that for his former ſins the
" Evil One had received power over him. For what
" need I ſay farther, than that he even believed in
" our Jeſus, and had ſatisfied himſelf that ſouls were
" immortal, &c."——I have extracted this paſſage, as I apprehend it to be the prototype of Dr. Franklin's celebrated parable againſt perſecution; who is

* Literally the Devil.

by ſome ſuppoſed to have taken his idea from Dr. Jeremy Taylor: but this gentleman, having been a divine, and a man of much reading, the reader cannot be at a loſs whence he took the idea which he obtruded upon the world as his own.

Lib. iii. ſect. 60. teaches that devils would be permitted, towards the end of the world, to perform even beneficent miracles: which Matthew has alluded to, ch. xxiv. ver. 24.

Lib. iv. Sect. 35. teaches that Chriſt was the acceptable year of the Lord; whoſe twelve months were the twelve apoſtles.

Lib. v. Sect. 23. Simon, after entering his proteſt againſt image-worſhip under any pretext, moſt beautifuily obſerves, "But if you truly "wiſh to worſhip the image of God, you "ſhould worſhip the *true* image of God, "namely man; by giving meat to the hun-"gry, by giving drink to the thirſty, by "cloathing the naked, by viſiting the ſick,

"by

" by taking the ſtranger within thy gates,
" and relieving the neceſſities of the priſoner:
" ſuch image-worſhip will be approved by
" God."

Lib. vi. Sect. 4. Believing children were to ſeparate themſelves from their unbelieving parents—and believing parents from their unbelieving children: *For I came not* upon the earth *to ſend peace but a ſword.* Matthew, ch. x. v. 34. The ſame is taught, Rec. l. vii. c. 29; and Homily xi. ſect. 19. Women were ordered to ſeparate themſelves from their unbelieving huſbands. By ſeparating is meant, that they ſhould not have any common meal with relatives, however nearly allied; which was upon no conſideration to be diſpenſed with. For in this book, though after a ſeparation of twenty years, the mother and ſon came to the knowledge of each other; and though the poor woman had not broken her faſt for twenty-four hours, or, as in the Clementines, for forty-eight hours, except with a glaſs of water,

water, and to the truth of which Peter's wife ſwore *; yet all was in vain, for till ſhe was baptiſed, there could be no common meal; and what made the matter ſtill worſe was, that ſhe was to faſt twenty-four hours more before ſhe could be baptiſed: for this preparation was at this time indiſpenſibly neceſſary.

Now I appeal to the candid reader whether thoſe perſons who propagated a religion ſubverſive of all the happineſs and comfort of private life, ſhould not be objects of hatred of all mankind, *odio humani generis*, as obſerved in Tacitus.

Lib. viii. Sect. 28. Man is called a *little world.* I only mention it, as this is the earlieſt author in whom I have met with this idea.

—— from Section 9 to 34, Nicetas, the Chriſtian ſpeaker, delivers himſelf finely upon Providence.

—— Sect. 50. we are taught that God ſet Angels of evil diſpoſitions over every nation.

* In doing ſo ſhe forgot ſhe was a Chriſtian, as we ſhall ſhortly ſee.

Lib.

Lib. 10. ſect. 30, 34. The heathen fables allegoriſed.

Perhaps this gave riſe to Lord Verulam's Treatiſe on the Wiſdom of the Ancients.

Aquila, the Catechumen, having aſked Peter whether the books of the Heathen poets ſhould not be deſtroyed, which by recording the adulteries, inceſtuous marriages and parricides of their gods, might corrupt the minds of the youth? Peter anſwers, lib. x. ſect. 39—

" My deareſt Aquila, aſſure yourſelf, that all things " are carried on by the good providence of God; ſo " that not only a weak, a trifling, nay even a baſe " cauſe ſhould be oppoſed to truth. If the ſupport " of error was ſtronger and more probable, few, who " were deceived, would return to the way of truth. " For, if even *now*, when ſo many ſhameful and un- " becoming things are related of the gods of the Hea- " thens, ſcarcely any one forſakes his filthy error; " how much more would the evil be increaſed, if " any thing honourable, or probable, was mentioned " of them? For the mind is with difficulty removed " from thoſe things in the belief of which it was " brought up from its earlieſt age: and therefore, as " I have ſaid, it was ordained by Divine Providence,

" that

" that the ſupport of error ſhould be both baſe and " weak. Moreover, all other things, in like manner, " are wiſely and fitly diſpenſed by Divine Providence; " though, on account of our not knowing the cauſes " of things, the reaſon of a good, and the beſt divine " diſpenſation, may not appear." The ſentiment here, I believe, will be allowed to be beautiful. What are we think of Pliny's *multitudes* of Chriſtians!

THE CLEMENTINES.

Homily ii. Sect. 16, 17, 18. Peter admits that Simon the Magician had been a teacher *before* himſelf.

—— Sect. 23. Peter ſays, That Simon was a diſciple of John the Baptiſt's: alſo, that the Baptiſt had twenty-nine men, and one woman, for his chief diſciples, as typical of the revolution of the moon: for this requiring twenty-nine days and a half, the woman being only *half* a man, the type was complete.

—— Sect. 41. Peter ſays, there are mentioned in ſcripture many lies againſt God; therefore,

our

our Lord ſaid, *Be ye ſkilful money-changers* *: that is, that his diſciples ſhould be ſkilful at diſtinguiſhing *true* from falſe ſcripture.

To make any comment upon this paſſage is needleſs. However, it may not be unneceſſary to obſerve, that this paſſage of ſcripture, *Be ye ſkilful money-changers*; though frequently cited by the Fathers, is not now to be found in the New Teſtament: which evinces the truth of the charge made by Celſus and Julian againſt the Chriſtians, of their altering their ſacred books. Perhaps when they got them to their fancy, and had ordained that they ſhould be underſtood by laymen, agreeably to what they were taught by their biſhops and paſtors, it was then thought proper to take away this very extraordinary paſſage.

This brings me to the doctrine at this time maintained by the Chriſtians, namely, of the Conjugations †; that is, of truths and falſehoods being blended together in them ‡: for which reaſon Jeſus, when he accuſed the Sadducees, ſaid, "*You err on this account, "that ye do not know the true things in the Scriptures, for*

* Section 51.
† Συσυγιας, Hom. iii. Sect. 16.
‡ Ib. S. 50.

"*which reaſon you are ignorant of the power of God**." Which in our's runs thus, *Do ye* not *err*, &c.: and agreeably, it is true, to our Greek copies: but it requires but little critical acumen to perceive that the paſſage ſhould be read without an interrogation; for Jeſus is ſolving a difficulty, and difficulties are ſeldom ſolved by aſking queſtions, nor by taxing the interrogators with ignorance: beſides it is no where, that I recollect, ſaid in Scripture, that their ſhall *not* be marriages in heaven. Beſides that the two *nots* and the neither ſo cloſe together, may be deemed a ſingular phraſeology in elegant Greek language. Perhaps it was owing to theſe alterations which has rendered the idiom of the Greek Teſtament ſo inelegant, that it was mentioned that the writers of it were poor, illiterate, ignorant tent-makers and fiſhermen.

Peter has given us ſome curious inſtances of theſe Conjugations. In Sections 15, 16, 17, 18, of the Second Homily, he informs us, that in theſe Conjugations of good and evil, in things which immediately proceed from God, that the good always comes firſt,

* Δια τουτο πλανασθε, μη ειδοτες τα αληθη των γραφων, του ενεκεν αγνοειτε την δυναμιν του Θεου. Mark xii. 24.

then

then the evil; as for inſtance, God made the heaven firſt, which was good, and then the earth; day and night; ſun and moon; life and death. But in what proceeds immediately from man, this order is reverſed: for the evil comes firſt, and then good; as for inſtance, wicked Cain came firſt, and juſt Abel the ſecond: Iſmael, and then the bleſſed Iſaac—the wicked Eſau, and pious Jacob.—And laſtly Simon the Magician—and *after him* the bleſſed Peter, the prince of the Apoſtles of *Chriſt:* whereas Simon was only a teacher of Jeſus. See S. 49. l. 3. p. 93.

I muſt here inform the reader, that whoever will examine the original, that in my repreſentation of this matter, as indeed throughout, I have been favourable to the Catholics.

Perhaps the reader may be curious to know which were thoſe parts of Scripture that were falſe. To anſwer this queſtion at full length, I confeſs to be beyond my power: however, that it was not a ſmall part muſt be inferred from all ſects of heretics being able to adduce, in favour of their hypotheſis, texts of Scriptures which in the opinion of the early Catholics evidently ſupported their ſeveral heretical notions:

I have met with this idea in Dr. Prieſtley's writings; I at the time thought it was an original one of the Doctor's; but, from what I have ſeen in turning over the Ancients, I am inclined to think, that among the Moderns there are but few original *metaphyſical* ideas: unleſs we ſhould honour by ſuch an appellation their groundleſs reveries. I have ſome notion too that Biſhop Horſley is unacquainted with the doctrine of the Conjugations; for otherwiſe he ſhould ere now have warned the drudges of the hierarchy, of the dangers they might run into by a peruſal of the Scriptures without having ſome clue to guide them through the ſhoals and quickſands, and unwittingly embrace the falſe for the true, and reject the true for the falſe.

However, though I cannot lay before the reader all thoſe parts of Scripture which they [Catholics] held to be falſe, yet as Peter has mentioned ſome things in it which were notoriouſly ſo; I preſume I ſhall not be taxed with preſumption, if I lay before the reader ſome of thoſe paſſages.

Firſt of all, Peter obſerved, that the Law was not written by Moſes; for, ſays he, "It is written in the "Law itſelf, *and Moſes died, and they buried him near*

"*the*

" *the houſe of Bethpeor, and no one hath known his ſepul-*
" *chre to this day* *. Could Moſes then, ſays Peter,
" who was dead, write *that Moſes was dead.*"

Again, Peter having ſhewn that God muſt have preſcience and conſequently know before-hand whatever will come to paſs; therefore, ſays he, thoſe paſſages in Scripture which ſeem to imply ignorance in the Deity, muſt neceſſarily ſay that of him, which was obviouſly untrue, therefore they muſt be lies: to which Clemens, to whom he was explaining thoſe matters, having entirely acceded, Peter proceeds, " If, therefore, " ſome things be true, and others falſe, in Scripture, " our Maſter with very good reaſon (ευλογως) ſaid to " us, *Be ye therefore ſkilful money-changers*; as there " are ſome things ſaid in Scripture which are true, " and others which are apocryphal: and he clearly " pointed out the cauſe of the error of thoſe who " were miſlead by *falſe* Scripture, when he ſaid, *For* " *this reaſon you err, becauſe ye know not the true things* " *of Scripture; on which account you are ignorant even of* " *the power of God.* And I [Clemens] ſaid, it is

* There is a little difference here between our copy of the Bible and my author.

" very

" very clear. Peter anſwered, Therefore, not taking
" up an impious opinion, I with very good reaſon
" do not believe what is ſaid againſt God, nor againſt
" the holy men mentioned in Scripture. For I am
" perſuaded that Adam was not a tranſgreſſor, who
" was formed by the hands of God: nor Noah a
" drunkard, who was found to be juſt above all the
" world: nor that Abraham cohabited at the ſame
" time with three wives, who, on account of his
" chaſtity, was thought worthy of a numerous pro-
" geny: nor that Jacob married four wives, two of
" whom were even ſiſters, who was the father of the
" Twelve Tribes, and had propheſied the future
" advent of our Maſter: nor that Moſes was a man-
" ſlayer; nor that he was taught by an idolatrous
" prieſt how to pronounce judgment, who *propheſied*
" *to* all future ages the law of God; and who, for
" his right underſtanding, received the teſtimony of
" a faithful ſteward." Clem. Hom. ii. S. 51, 52.

Perhaps ſome may think, that Peter's affirming there were things true and falſe in the Scriptures, that believers themſelves might be endangered by miſtaking the falſe for the true: but in this they would

judge

judge very wrong: for in Homily xvi. Sect. 14. *Peter assures Simon, that they who believed in Christ, who was the Son of God, were, in consequence of such belief, thereby enabled to distinguish the true from the false.* I am inclined to think that freethinkers will hold this to be a conclusive argument in favour of what the ancient oppugners of Christianity affirmed of its professors; namely, *that the Christian religion existed solely in an absurd credulity,*

Hom. iii. Sect. 20, 21, &c. informs us that Adam was a prophet, which was another undeniable proof, according to Peter, that he could not be a transgressor. Perhaps the *lay* reader may startle at such a notion; but this would only evince that he had either not read the beginning of the book of Genesis, or in so slight a manner that it made no impression on him. Had he not been a prophet then could he have given names to the birds and beasts indicative of their natures, of which he could have had no experience. Perhaps some may imagine that he had this faculty *before* he had eaten of the apple which debased his nature: be it so. But that this story of the apple is a mere fiction is hence evinced, that he *propheſied after*

he

he had eaten the apple: and we are assured that no transgressor * could prophesy. But it may be asked, What did he prophesy after he had eaten of the apple? Why, he gave names descriptive of their future fortunes to his two sons, Cain and Abel. Could this be without a prophetic spirit?

Hom. iv. Sect. 71. Peter says, "If any one," [meaning a bishop] "who has what is sufficient for "his support, receives wages, this person sells the "Word; but if he has not, though he should receive "food for his support, he does not sin: as even the "Lord, who had nothing, though he possessed all "things, accepted suppers from his friends." Mind, reader, that this work formed, at one time, a portion of the New Testament, and as such was read in the assemblies of Christians. We before saw that Presbyters were by the Apostolical Constitutions commanded to be industrious, and thereby avoid consuming those first-fruits, tenths, and other offerings of the pious, which were intended for the moderate support of the bishop, but chiefly for the relief of the poor and distressed.

* See page 390.

Hom.

Hom. viii. Sect. 12—18. Peter informs us, that dæmons were the *ſouls* of the giants, who were begotten of women from the commerce of angels, but who were drowned at the time of the univerſal flood. We are alſo informed, that theſe dæmons adhered to meat and drink, and that exceſs in either would ſurely be attended with the getting a dæmon into our body: but, to a certainty, the eating any thing offered to dæmons *. This is a very different account from that which Mr. Farmer has given of them, but which is received by the *philoſophical* Unitarians.

Hom. xv. Sect. 5—8. We are here ſhewn why Chriſtians ſhould love their enemies and thoſe who maltreated them: becauſe, that ſuch trifling ſufferings in this life would ſave them from far greater in another.

Ib. Sect. 9. Chriſtians are taught, that to have property is to be in a ſtate of ſin. But to uſe Peter's words: "To all perſons *poſſeſſions are ſins*: to be de-"prived of them by any means whatever is the taking "away of ſin." This paſſage ſhews, that Mr. Burke's notion of the primitive Chriſtians is far *more juſt* than

† Recog. lib. 4. ſect. 15, &c.

that of his *theological* opponent *, who pretends to teach the *layman*, preſumed to be unverſed in theſe ſtudies.

Hom. xvii. Sect. 7, 8. Peter maintains, that God had a form reſembling that of men; but, like the ſun with its rays, may extend himſelf to infinity.

Ib. Sect. 10. Peter affirms, that if God has not a limited form, he cannot be ſeen. This cannot be conteſted; therefore if God be infinite, what Jeſus ſays, Matthew, chap. v. *Bleſſed are the humble, for they ſhall ſee God*, muſt be allowed to be unfounded.

The duty of biſhops is laid down in the ſixty-fourth Section of the third Homily. Peter ſays, "Do "you [biſhops] not certainly know that you ought "not to govern men as the governors of the Heathens, "but as a ſervant to miniſter unto them; as a father "to defend them when injured; as a phyſician to "viſit them; as a ſhepherd to guard them: in a "word, to have all your thoughts employed to ſe-"cure their ſalvation." I am inclined to think that our preſent hierarchy bears but a ſmall reſemblance to this picture. The reſemblance may, perhaps, be

* Dr. Prieſtley.

thought

thought ſtill leſs concerning other matters: for in the ſixth Section of the twelfth Homily, Peter aſſures Clemens, that he only eat bread and olives, and rarely pot-herbs, and that he only poſſeſſed, with regard to cloathing, a coat and a cloak.

From Sect. twenty-five to the end of this Homily, the qualities of philanthropy, or benevolence (φιλανθρωπια), and compaſſion (φιλια), are clearly and elegantly pointed out, and their *eſſential* differences accurately marked. The former is laid down to be peculiar to men, the latter to women. The former the author makes to be a complex idea, comprehending compaſſion, and a general love towards the ſpecies; but compaſſion to be only a diſagreeable ſenſation, ariſing from the view of a ſuffering object. In univerſal propoſitions of this nature, there muſt be allowed to be many exceptions, their being many women capable of the moſt exalted philanthropy. But in general, I apprehend, it muſt be allowed, that philanthropy, as here defined, is far more generally found in men than in women; and that women are far more compaſſionate than men. Mr. Ledyiard, who was choſen by the Society of Gentlemen for making

diſcoveries in the inland parts of Africa, but who unfortunately died at Alexandria, bears teſtimony to the compaſſionate diſpoſition of women in all countries: the reader, who will compare what he ſays upon this ſubject, with what is mentioned in the Clementine Homilies, will perceive a very great affinity, though it is highly improbable that he ever ſaw this work: but his reflections were the reſult of experience, which every man, much verſant in the world, muſt alſo have experienced.

The thirteenth, fourteenth, and particularly the nineteenth Sections glance at Paul's viſion, and perhaps are taken from *the Judgment of Peter*.

Clementine Epitome.

Sect. 34. Catechumens were not permitted to be preſent while the faithful were at prayer.

Sect. 152. We are informed of one Sicinnius, who, ſuſpecting that his wife had other objects in view beſide prayer at the nightly meetings of the Chriſtians, followed her thither: upon his entering the aſſembly he is immediately deprived of the uſe of his eyes and ears, to which he was not reſtored till, through the mediation of his wife, the holy biſhop

St.

St. Clemens, the ſuſpected adulterer, came and removed his misfortune. The end of this miracle was obvious. It would deter ſilly men from preſuming to ſatisfy themſelves concerning their wives infidelity.

We have in this collection of Cotelerius, beſides the works already noted, three other writings; namely, *an Epiſtle of St. Peter* to James biſhop of Jeruſalem, the brother of our Lord—a *Conteſtatio* of James—and an *Epiſtle* of Clemens Romanus to the ſaid James. The *Epiſtle of Peter* was intended by the writer to be ſubjoined to the *Preachings of Peter*, and therefore we may aſſign to it the ſame date as we have done with regard to the *Preachings*, namely, about the latter end of the third century. The object of this letter is to entreat James "not to put into the hands of any "one, whether a Hebrew or Heathen convert, his "Preachings, leſt, through ignorance, or carnal con-"jectures (υπο των κατα την ψυχην σοφασμων), they ſhould "be drawn into error, and thus be the means of "leading others into the ſame pit of perdition; *in like* "*manner as Moſes did, who delivered the holy writings* "*to the ſeventy elders who received his church* *." Hence

* Numbers, chap. xi, 25.

we

we may fairly infer, that, according to Peter and the Chriſtians (and the reader will pleaſe to recollect this Epiſtle was ſubjoined to a writing which formerly belonged to the New Teſtament), the books of Moſes were not allowed to be generally in the hands of the Hebrews. By this means ignorant Chriſtians might be eaſily impoſed on by artful individuals: for, when a Hebrew or a Jew would adduce in favour of his argument a ſection of the Bible different from that received by the Chriſtians, theſe might anſwer, that perhaps it might be ſo in their copies; but the *ſection*, in the *true* original, which Moſes had delivered to the Seventy, and agreeable to which they would not fail to affirm their copy to be, was entirely in favour of the Chriſtian expoſition, which their ignorant, ſottiſh followers, who held critical learning in contempt, would greedily ſwallow.

Upon the receipt of the letter, James convoked the Preſbyters, and acquaints them of the nature of it; and ordains, that whatever Preſbyter hereafter ſhould be entruſted with the ſacred writing (Peter's Preachings) ſhould, *as it was unlawful to ſwear*, call "the "heaven, the earth, and the water, in which all things

"are

" are contained; and moreover the air, which per-
" vades every thing, and without which we ceaſe to
" live, to witneſs, that he will be obedient to him
" who gave him the *Preachings of Peter*; and that he
" will upon no account give them to another perſon:
" that he will not copy them, nor give a copy of
" them, nor allow them to be copied, neither by
" himſelf, nor by any other, on account of any in-
" ducement, fraud, or contrivance: that he will not
" negligently take care of them, or add any thing
" to them, or adulterate them, nor, upon any pre-
" text whatever, grant them to another, unleſs he
" ſhall find ſome one worthy, as he himſelf was
" judged to be ſo, and ſhall approve him to be ſo
" by a trial of at leaſt *ſix years*: then, if pious and
" good, and ready to undertake the office of teacher,
" he will deliver them as he received them, and he
" will do theſe things according to the judgment of
" the biſhop." Hence we may infer, that when ſo many precautions were taken that theſe *Preachings of Peter*, which made a part of the New Teſtament, ſhould not get into unhallowed hands, that equal precaution was taken with regard to the others. This

will

will account for Tertullian's referring, in his Prescriptions, to the authentic copies of Scripture at Corinth, Philippi, &c. for there were few who were trusted with them.

In the Epistle of Clemens Romanus to James the duty of a bishop is thus briefly laid down: "He "ought to live blameless, and to cast from him with "the greatest care all wordly occupations: that he "should not be either a surety or an advocate, nor "upon any account be implicated in wordly business: "for Christ intended not to appoint him a judge, or "give him cognizance of money transactions, or "things pertaining to this life, lest, that being de-"tained by the present cares of mankind, he would "not have time, by means of the WORD OF TRUTH, "to separate the good men from the wicked. But "they indeed who have learned those things should "assist the others (αλληλων, *sibi invicem*), and not with-"draw you from discourses which are able to save "from damnation. For as it would be sinful in you, "having forsaken that which you were ordered to "do, to attend to wordly cares: in like manner it "would be a sin in every laic, if he did not assist

"others

" others (αλληλων, *ſibi invicem*)in their worldly neceſ-
" ſities. And if they did not know this, they ſhould be
" taught it by the deacons, that the biſhop might live
" free from worldly cares, in order to have his
" thoughts fixed upon the church alone, to enable
" him to govern it with propriety, and deliver the
" words of Truth."

Sect. 7. Preſbyters are required to marry early; nay, the elderly not to remain unmarried. Clementines, Hom. iii. S. 68. preſcribe the ſame. See p. 391.

Sect. 18. All intercourſe with the perſons who were upon ill terms with the biſhop proſcribed.

This letter of Clemens mentions, Section 2, that Peter had given to him the power of binding and looſing; which I apprehend will, together with Euſebius's ſilence concerning it, juſtify me in placing its date towards the latter end of the fourth century.

I ſhall here put an end to my obſervations on the Apoſtolical Fathers, and thoſe ſpurious writings aſcribed to Clemens Romanus. I had originally intended to have purſued the ſubject through the Primitive Fathers alſo; but as theſe ſheets have now arrived to the full ſize of a volume, I ſhall poſtpone to another pub-

lication my thoughts on them, which will alſo contain what will particularly ſtrike me in the peruſal of the works of Joſephus and Philo Judæus; both of whom without any heſitation, I affirm to be only ideal perſons; and that the writings aſcribed to them, are Chriſtian forgeries: but concerning their age, it is more than I ſhall promiſe I ſhall be able to determine, not having read theſe writings: but that they are forgeries I well know from the various citations I have met with from them, and from the manner in which Photius and Suidas have ſpoken of them. Farther, I alſo affirm, and undertake to prove, beyond the power of contradiction upon any reaſonable ground, that no ſuch perſons as Juſtin Martyr or Irenæus, or Clemens Alexandrinus, ever exiſted, and the other perſons uſually called Primitive Fathers; and that the writings aſcribed to them are all Chriſtian forgeries. And to adduce a ſingle argument which will be held equivalent to a thunderbolt by thoſe acquainted with the writings of the Apoſtolical and Primitive Fathers, as evincing the ſpuriouſneſs of them, I ſhall obſerve, that throughout all theſe writings, there are alluſions almoſt in every page to the *Docete* hereſy; but in the Shepherd,

or

or Hermas, and in the ſeven laſt books of the Recognitions, which I have ſhewn, I think, to be the *Periodos* of Origen, each of which conſiſts of many pages, nay are twenty times as long as ſome of thoſe Epiſtles of Ignatius, which are filled with alluſions to this hereſy, yet in theſe writings there is no alluſion whatever to it; which beyond a doubt evinces, that they were compoſed *before* this hereſy had ſprung up. Farther, though I have not read the works of Origen and Cyprian, yet it impreſſed me conſiderably when reading Lardner's Hiſtory of the Heretics to find, that few or no paſſages at all were adduced from their writings concerning this hereſy; which, conſidering their voluminouſneſs, muſt alſo appear very ſingular, had this hereſy, or any of the Gnoſtic hereſies, exiſted in their time. I confeſs, that having no ſuſpicion whatever of the non-exiſtence of Tertullian, or that the writings aſcribed to him were ſpurious, I was not as much on the watch as I otherwiſe ſhould have been, had I ſuſpected his writings to be apocryphal. I own, however, I was much ſurprized at the ſameneſs of language for pages together, which I perceived in Irenæus and Tertullian; and ſome of thoſe obſervations which Mr.

Semler had laid before the public ſeventeen years ago occurred to me alſo. But the important diſcovery made by this gentleman is, that Tertullian, from his intimate knowledge of the circumſtances concerning Marcion, muſt neceſſarily have been a Roman Preſbyter. This being evident from his arguments, and being alſo in direct oppoſition to the tradition of the Fathers, who make him a Preſbyter of the Church of Carthage, and *never* of that of Rome, which he could ſcarcely be, if, for his ſeditious practices at Rome, he had been baniſhed from that city: for in this caſe, had the Apoſtolical Canon exiſted, which forbade the receiving Chriſtians into other Chriſtian aſſemblies, without recommendatory letters, it had been impoſſible. But be this matter how it would, had he been expelled the Roman Church, and retired to Carthage, conſidering the voluminouſneſs of his writings, both in the Greek and Latin languages, his hiſtory would not have been confined to two or three facts; namely, of his being a Preſbyter of the Church of Carthage, and his having embraced Montaniſm: the ſanguineneſs of his temper muſt always, with his extenſive erudition and the ſeverity of his manners, united with a talent for compoſition,

poſition, have made him a conſpicuous perſonage. When all this is conſidered, and that the writings aſcribed to him were chiefly compoſed to confute the Praxean and Docete hereſies, which I will affirm were only the Sabellian and Manichean hereſies a little altered; and that this will appear evident from the manner in which the Ancient Fathers ſpeak of theſe hereſies: I ſay then, when all this is properly weighed, the reader ſhould agree with me, that no ſuch perſon ever exiſted as Tertullian; and that the writings aſcribed to him, are fabrications of the Roman Church, towards the cloſe of the third century.

Again, there being no mention made of, or alluſion to the Docete hereſy in the writings of *Origen* and *Cyprian*, nor in the *Shepherd* or *Hermas*, nor in the *Periodos* or *Travels of Peter*, is a farther proof that the *Docete hereſy* had not been broached when theſe writings were publiſhed.

Perhaps it will be objected, that there being manifeſt alluſions in the Epiſtles of St. Paul, to ſay nothing of thoſe alſo in the Goſpels, and the Canonical Epiſtles to the *Docete* hereſy; that I am reduced to the dilemma of admitting, either that Paul was a Prophet,

contrary

contrary to the expreſs teſtimony of Peter *, which would materially affect my ſyſtem; or that the Epiſtles aſcribed to him, were written *after* the time of Manes, or at leaſt thoſe parts of them which apparently allude to the Docete hereſy. I would doubtleſs be reduced to this delemma, could it be proved, or, I will allow, even rendered probable, that the Books of the New Teſtament, as they now appear, had been publiſhed even in the ſuppoſed age of Tertullian. But the ingenious and candid Mr. Semler has relieved me out of this difficulty, by evincing, that it is highly probable, from the manner in which Tertullian maintains the Catholic cauſe againſt Praxeas, that he had never ſeen the writings of the New Teſtament. But were they publiſhed in his time, can we ſuppoſe that he, who was a Preſbyter, and a moſt learned Theologian, would not have a copy of them, but, inſtead of reſorting to his own copy, ſhould refer to thoſe depoſited at Rome, Corinth, &c. Nay, I am even inclined, for many reaſons, to think that before the council of Nice, nay, before the council of Conſtantinople, A. D. 381, and perhaps even later, that the New Teſtament was

* Rec. l. i. ſect. 48.

not

not publiſhed in ſuch a manner as to be eaſily obtained by the Laity. But be this conjecture as it may, Mr. Semler, who could have no idea of the uſe which I have made of his diſcovery of the late publication of the ſacred writings of the New Teſtament; and my own ſyſtem, founded in a great meaſure upon the obvious ſpuriouſneſs of the Epiſtles of St. Paul, as evidently compoſed after the riſe of the Docete hereſy, the two facts mutually ſupporting each other, muſt independently of every other argument, impreſs the reader with the juſtneſs of both our opinions, as being grounded upon reaſons, though perfectly diſtinct, yet which perfectly harmonize.

The reader will further recollect, that in the *Conteſtatio* of James, biſhop of Jeruſalem, the brother of Jeſus, that Biſhops and Preſbyters were forbidden, under the moſt ſolemn obligations, not to communicate the ſacred writings entruſted with them to any perſon for peruſal—nor to copy them themſelves—nor to allow others to copy them. This, independently of either Mr. Semler's arguments or mine, evidently evinces the *non-publication* of the Sacred Writings when the *Conteſtatio* was written: which, if it relates only to the

Periodos

Periodos or *Travels of Peter*, muſt be towards the middle of the third century. But if it alludes to the Goſpel or Preachings of Peter, or the Praxis, we muſt place it half a century later.

Before I proceed to lay before the reader my general concluſions formed with the utmoſt impartiality, of which he will ſhortly have a moſt convincing proof, I ſhall make two or three obſervations upon Biſhop Horſley and Dr. Prieſtley; which, conſidering the little eſteem in which I hold their theological writings, I ſhould be ſorry he would lay down my book, with an idea that I had failed even an iota of the juſtneſs of my ſentiment upon this head, which I ſhall now farther evince.

In the ſecond ſection of the ſecond book of his Hiſtory of Opinions, page 101, the Doctor informs us, that Athenagoras held the Son, or God-Word, to be *undivided* from the Father; and to ſhew he underſtood this term, he has put it in Italics. In the ſame ſection, giving the opinion of Euſebius, biſhop of Cæſarea, upon the ſame point, he ſays, that Euſebius held him to be a *diſtinct ſubſiſtence*, vol. ii. page 70. I therefore believe it will be admitted by the ingenious Doctor himſelf, that ſub-

ſiſtencies

ſiſtencies *diſtinct*, muſt be *divided*, the reverſe of which was aſſerted by Athenagoras: therefore the middle of this ſection contradicts the beginning and end: for in the middle he gives the ſentiment of this Euſebius, whom this very paſſage evinces to be an Arian; but in the beginning and end of it, he gives the ſentiments of the Catholics, who held that the ſubſiſtence of the Son, or God-Word, was *not divided* from the ſubſiſtence of the Father. This remark farther evinces that the learned Doctor does not know an *Arian* ſentiment, when clearly laid before him; for otherwiſe he would not have advanced that Euſebius was orthodox: but the truth is, that the Doctor does not know in what conſiſted either *Catholiciſm*, or *Arianiſm*. Nay he does not ſeem to know, that Cyril of Jeruſalem was, though a profeſſing *Catholic*, in heart an Arian: and to his prevaricating, is to be imputed the inconſiſtency between his two ſimilies in Hiſt. Op. vol. ii. page 122—381.

But what is truly very ſingular is that neither Dr. Prieſtley, nor Biſhop Horſley, as I ſhall immediately ſhew, nor Mr. Gibbon ſeem, notwithſtanding the dogmatizing ſpirit of the two former, to be even as well

informed upon the Neſtorian controverſy, as the compiler of the article Neſtorius in the *Dictionaire Hiſtorique*: and that Mr. Gibbon does not ſeem to know, no more than theſe two *learned* Divines, that Dupin, near a century ago, *recanted* what he had advanced concerning the Neſtorian hereſy being only a *diſpute of words*, in conſequence of the animadverſions of the Abbe Pluquet.

To conclude for the preſent with Dr. Prieſtley. His *Hiſtory of Opinions*, to thoſe acquainted with the Greek and Latin languages, is a very uſeful performance; as containing a great number of very curious paſſages from the Fathers, upon the moſt important ſubjects. But thoſe readers who do not underſtand the dead languages, ſhould, unleſs they chooſe to fill their heads with chimeras, not read it: the expoſitions of the cited paſſages being very ſeldom accurate—ſometimes giving a meaning very different from that of the writer—nay ſometimes the very oppoſite. I ſhall have occaſion in my progreſs to give a few inſtances on this head; and am now ready to ſatisfy the Doctor, or any of his friends, of the juſtneſs of this cenſure: but, as it

muſt

muſt be admitted, they will beſt appear in my obſervations on the miſ-expounded authour.

There are two obvious cauſes for the Doctor's miſtakes. Firſt, his ſuppoſing that Jeſus was the Chriſt expected by the Hebrew nation—the ſecond is, his imagining, that becauſe the wiſdom of God, or the God-Word, is ſaid to have been *perſonified*; that therefore it was held by the ancient Catholics to have been *dis*joined from the Father: whereas their idea was, that though it was *perſonified*, yet that it was not *dis*joined from the Father, no, nor that it was joined neither; this being the opinion of the Doctor's favourite, Marcellus, the Unitarian, as he calls him, whoſe opinion ought therefore to be held right by the Doctor: and as *ſuch* it ſhould not ſtartle him that a thing might be *perſonified*, without being thereby made a *ſeparate* perſon.

The Catholic faith was *a golden mean* which lay preciſely in the midway of two extremes: namely, of the Arian hereſy, which *ſeparated* the Divine ſubſiſtencies of the Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit; and of the Sabellian, or Marcellian hereſy, which *joined them* together: thus ſituated, it is evident, that againſt the

latter they could maintain three *distinct* subsistencies in the Divine nature; and against the former, that these three subsistencies (hypostases) formed only *one* *ousia*, a term of the same import, except on the present occasion, as hypostasis or subsistence.

To proceed to Bishop Horsley. His Lordship, *Tracts*, p. 47, argues that Dr. Priestley was unfounded in expounding * these words of Theophilus, ουκ αλλω δε τινι ειρηκε ποιησωμεν, αλλ ἡ τω εαυτου λογω, και της εαυτου σοφιᾳ, "That when God said *Let us make man*, he "spake to nothing but his own Logos or Wisdom;" thus making Logos and Wisdom to be different appellations of the same person. His Lordship, more elegantly and more agreeably, thus expounds this passage—"It was to no other person that he said *let us* "*make*, than to his own Word, and to his own Wis-"dom;" and insists, that *his own Word, and his own Wisdom*, mean the *God-Word*, or Son, *and* the Holy Spirit: which exposition and comment Dr. Priestley has approved of. These two learned Divines being therefore agreed upon this head, and as I have frequently professed that I am an unlettered layman, I

* Hist. of Corruptions of Christianity, vol. i. p. 35.

must

muſt therefore recur to authority before I could expect that the reader would attend to any arguments founded upon the *reaſon of the thing*, in oppoſition to theſe very learned Divines, one of whom has acknowledged the error of his expoſition, and admits of the comment of his adverſary.

But firſt, I beg leave to aſk Biſhop Horſley a few queſtions. My Lord, was Menard a learned man? You will not deny, I truſt, that he was one of the moſt learned writers of the laſt century, which, not like the preſent ignorant age, abounded with learned men. My Lord, was Cotelerius a learned man? Your Lordſhip very well knows, that he was a moſt learned man. My Lord, was Le Clerc a learned man? Perhaps this you may deny: his being inclined to *humaniſm*, and being a *low churchman*, two errors, I apprehend, of the blackeſt die in your Lordſhip's opinion, might render you backward in adding your ſuffrage to his learning. Were the Benedictine editors of Juſtin Martyr, my Lord, learned men? Your Lordſhip knows, that a Benedictine editor, and a moſt learned writer, are as neceſſarily connected as ſnow and whiteneſs. Now, my Lord, the perſons here mentioned, who were not only

ſuperior

ſuperior to you, my Lord, and Dr. Prieſtley, but even to all Britain in theological knowledge, entertained only one ſentiment concerning the import of theſe words, namely, that the Word and Wiſdom were only two appellations of the Son: and that the latter did not *at all* apply to the Holy Spirit. The Benedictines render it thus: Nemini autem dicit *faciamus*, niſi verbo ſuo et ſapientiæ, lib. ii. ſect. 16.

Your Lordſhip, having a high opinion of your proficiency in the Greek language, may deſpiſe the writings of learned Catholics. However, to obviate all evaſion on this head, what does your Lordſhip think of Origen, who agrees with theſe learned moderns in ſuppoſing that God in this paſſage ſpoke to the Son only? Cont. Celſ. l. ii. ſ. 9. What of Euſebius, who your Lordſhip ſays is a candid writer?—a *diſcovery* reſerved for your Lordſhip's ſagacity. He alſo ſupports theſe moderns, H. E. l. i. c. 2. Ambroſe idem. Hex. c. 7. Irenæus idem, whoſe words are, *Adeſt enim ei ſemper verbum et ſapientia filius, et ſpiritus ſanctus*, making *Wiſdom* the Son, but the Holy Spirit a different being *.

* Gregory Nyſſen alſo ſuppoſes that God here ſpoke to the Son and Holy Spirit; but Gregory, writing when the divinity and diſtinct ſubſiſtency

The reader will find all these passages in note 68, p. 60, vol. i. of Le Clerc's ed. of the Pat. Apostolici. I proceed to consider the reason of the thing.

If Wisdom is the proper appellation of the Holy Spirit, as his Lordship contends, and in support of which notion he has *dared* to cite Tatian †, Irenæus, and Origen, but with what success is left to the reader, it will of course follow, that where Scripture says, *That Wisdom hath builded for herself a house* ‡, that it was the Holy

sistency of the Holy Spirit were questioned, adduced this passage as favouring both: but he nor no other of the Fathers could ever dream of interpreting Wisdom as an appellation of the Holy Spirit. The contrary interpretation, of its being only applicable to the Son, had been established by the *unanimous* concurrence of *all* the Fathers who had touched upon this subject. Irenæus, supposing that God spoke to the Son and Holy Spirit in this passage, evinces, that his writings were here interpolated: such a notion not having been advanced till the divinity of the Holy Spirit had been questioned, as just observed, towards the middle of the fourth century.

† If your Lordship should take any notice of these Strictures, I shall be obliged to your Lordship to point out the section in Tatian's writings in which he mentions this passage; for though they are very short, I have not been so fortunate as to cast my eye on it: and from the silence of the learned writers about Tatian, whom I have just mentioned, I am inclined to think they were equally unsuccessful. *Perhaps* the discovery was reserved to reward your Lordship's "watchfulness."

‡ Prov. ix. 1.

Spirit

Spirit which builded for herſelf a houſe, that is, was incarnated; for this is the meaning of the phraſe: ſo then, according to his Lordſhip, there were two of the Trinity incarnated!!!

Theſe two Doctors are the pride of Britain! Oh, fallen Britain!

I muſt obſerve here, that our tranſlation of this paſſage in the Bible, does not accord with the Septuagint *copy*: which is ſupported by the Apoſtolical Conſtitutions, l. v. c. 20.—By the interpolated epiſtle of Ignatius, ſee Sect. 2. To the Phil. idem, ſect. 2.—The Paris Bible agrees with theſe Fathers.

Your Lordſhip, whoſe paſtoral care ought and I am ſure is extended over a conſiderable extent of country, and whoſe opinions have great weight with the learned, I ſhould rather ſay the unlearned clergy of the Church of England, has, among other matters, recommended a courſe of ſtudy for the *novitiates of your order*: after firſt mentioning Biſhop Bull, in whom you ſay, "They will find an exact and critical detail of "the opinions of the Fathers of the three firſt cen-"turies." Permit me, my Lord, to doubt the juſtneſs of this aſſertion, it being ſcarcely poſſible, that

were

were there that *exact and critical detail of the opinions of the Fathers of the three firſt centuries*, but that your Lordſhip would have profited ſomewhat by the lection of a work which ſtands ſo high in *your* Lordſhip's eſtimation. For with regard to your Lordſhip, I will undertake to ſay, that not only with regard to the opinions of the Fathers for the three firſt centuries, but alſo for twice three afterwards, that your Lordſhip is a perfect ſtranger.

Your Lordſhip, after Biſhop Bull's writings on the ſubject of the Trinity, recommends *the original hiſtorians, Euſebius, Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret.* This is truly curious, having proved your Lordſhip a Sabellian for joining the ſubſiſtencies *, that the firſt writer you recommend ſhould be an *Arian*, or one who *ſeparated* the ſubſiſtencies: but what is ſtill more curious is, that your two next hiſtorians ſhould be Catholics, or Homoouſiaſts, who neither *joined the divine ſubſiſtencies together*, nor *ſeparated them.* So then, my Lord, you recommend to the noviciate clergy three authors, who teach a different doctrine from that which you yourſelf profeſs. This is being truly mag-

* Part Firſt, p. 140.

nanimous. I doubt, however, many will condemn it as imprudent. But Biſhop Bull, perhaps, in his Lordſhip's idea, would be an antidote againſt their poiſon. Your next hiſtorian is Theodoret. What, my Lord, recommend Theodoret's writings, which were condemned, and juſtly condemned by the *fifth general council*, for teaching doctrines ſubverſive of the *union according to the ſubſiſtence*.

My Lord, your being a pillar, and a chief pillar of the Engliſh hierarchy, I beg your attention here to the ſecond of the thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England. I am ſatisfied your Lordſhip has this article, as well as every other of them, deeply impreſſed on your memory: but as *ignorant* laymen, for whom I only write, are not much verſant on ſubjects of this nature, and that a common prayer-book is not now to be met with in every family, I ſhall therefore, for the convenience of thoſe of my readers who have not one, give it as I find it publiſhed by Eyre and Strahan, Printers to His Majeſty, anno 1773.

" The Son of God, which is the Word of the Father,
" begotten from everlaſting of the Father, the very and
" eternal God, of one ſubſtance with the Father, took

" man's

" man's nature in the womb of the bleſſed Virgin, of " her ſubſtance: ſo that two whole and perfect natures, " that is to ſay, the Godhead and manhood, *were joined* " *together in one perſon*, never to be divided, whereof is " one Chriſt, very God and very man; who truly ſuf- " fered, was crucified, dead, and buried, to reconcile " his Father to us, and to be a ſacrifice, not only for " original guilt, but alſo for actual ſins of men." Your Lordſhip has ſubſcribed theſe articles *ex animo:* I wiſh, therefore, to know what induced you to recommend the writings of Theodoret, which *deny* that the Godhead and manhood were *joined together* in ONE PERSON. Shall I impute it to your ignorance; or to your *depending* upon Mr. Gibbon's judgment, who thinks that the *Neſtorian hereſy* did not differ from *Catholiciſm*, and that it was a merely verbal diſpute.

The learned reader will readily perceive, that the drawers up of this article far exceeded the modern Proteſtant Engliſh divines in theological knowledge: though theſe have the preſumption to be daily ſtunning the ears of the public with expoſitions and commentaries, to which nothing but groſs ignorance or preſumption could give birth.

I now proceed to point out my own errors: for to ſuppoſe that an *unlettered layman* ſhould not have made miſtakes, would be quite unreaſonable, conſidering the numbers of errors with which the writings of thoſe learned divines, whom I have chiefly animadverted upon, abound.

My firſt and chief error I apprehend, was my ſuppoſing that the Ebionites were *not* Chriſtians. This I inferred from not having perceived in Dr. Prieſtley's writings any paſſage from the Fathers which expreſsly aſſerted it. For though it is clearly deducible from the paſſage cited from Origen [See Prel. Diſq. p. 4. note], yet hearing much of the ancient Fathers being greatly interpolated, (which I believe only to be the caſe in regard of thoſe ſpurious writings aſcribed to real or fictitious perſons), I was ſatisfied that ως χριστον, *as the Chriſt* in that paſſage was an interpolation: however, few ſheets of this Second Part had been printed off till I was convinced, from my own peruſal of the interpolated Epiſtle of Ignatius to the Philadelphians, that I was unfounded in making this concluſion. What led me to make this falſe inference was, that I could not conceive that believing *Gentile Jews*, could have given a contemptuous

contemptuous appellation to *believing Hebrews*, who held the ſame opinions as themſelves: in this I was right. But this nickname was given by the Catholics to thoſe of the *Gentile Jews* who believed Jeſus to be the *Chriſt*, and only a mere man: for no Hebrew *ever* believed Jeſus to be the Chriſt, and for which we have the unanimous teſtimony of all the Fathers, in the moſt expreſs terms: therefore the Ebionæans muſt all have been of Gentile extraction, as they acknowledged Jeſus to be the *Chriſt*.

Having evinced that there were three diſtinct ſorts of people called by one appellation, namely *Jews*; to wit, the *unbelieving Hebrews*, who held Jeſus to have been an impoſtor; the *believing Hebrews* who held him to have been an honeſt man, but not the Meſſiah, and who were alſo called Nazarenes—and the *believing Gentiles*, who held the ſame opinion as the Nazarenes; I ſhall now lay before the reader a literal tranſlation of the beginning of the ſecond book of Origen againſt Celſus. We know from Theodoret [Hær. fab. lib. ii. c. 2.], that Origen wrote againſt the Nazarenes: and that Celſus's Jew was a Nazarene, will clearly appear from this paſſage; and was *the* Nazarene againſt whom he

he wrote. As the three ſorts of Jews are clearly mentioned in it under one appellation, I ſhall put into brackets the ſort intended where the term occurs. There being ſeveral editions of this treatiſe, I ſhall omit the Greek text, the material part of which will be found at page 4 of the Preliminary Diſquiſition: the expoſition of which, the reader is requeſted to correct agreeably to the preſent one, in which he will perceive, that I am materially aſſiſted by the learned Benedictine editors. Origen ſays, "In the firſt book of our anſwer "to what Celſus has inſcribed *the True Word*, which "ends where the feigned perſon of the Jew ceaſes "to ſpeak to Jeſus, and which having come to a "proper ſize, we have determined to ſubjoin this, "in which we have repelled the accuſations brought "by him againſt thoſe of the people of the Jews "[Hebrews], who believe in Jeſus. And firſt we are "ſurprized at this, why Celſus, when he reſolved to in-"troduce feigned perſons, did not rather introduce his "Jew [Nazarene] ſpeaking to thoſe of the Gentiles "who believed, than to thoſe of the Jews [Hebrews, "Nazarenes]. For thus his diſcourſe againſt us would "have appeared much more probable. But, perhaps

"that

" that he, who boaſts of knowing every thing, did not
" know what he ſhould make his feigned perſons ſay
" agreeable to their character in this place. Let us
" conſider then what he ſays to thoſe of the Jews [He-
" brews, Nazarenes] who believed. He ſays, *that they*
" *having forſaken their national Law, being cajoled by*
" *Jeſus, and very ridiculouſly deceived, deſerted to another*
" *name, and another mode of living*. But he did not know,
" that they of the Jews [Hebrews, Nazarenes] who
" believe in Jeſus, have not forſaken their national
" law: for they live according to it; having got an
" appellation *agreeable to the ſignification of the law,*
" *interpreted according to the letter or the poverty**. But
" with the Jews [Gentile Jews] Ebion alſo is called a
" poor man; and they of the Jews [Gentile Jews],
" who have received Jeſus as the Chriſt, are nick-
named Ebionæans," as being followers of the ſtoic philoſopher Ebion; who, according to Marius Mercator, and Primaſius, the author of Præ-

* The Jews were literal expounders, and therefore would not ſtigmatize by an appellation the Ebionæans, who, like themſelves, were literal expounders: therefore the Hebrew Jews, or believers, were called Ebionæans, if this be the term Origen alludes to, by the Chriſtians, for being literal expounders.

deſtinatus

deſtinatus *, taught, that Jeſus, the Chriſt, was a common man.

The following paſſage from the interpolated Epiſtle of Ignatius to the Philadelphians, ſection ſixth, immediately convinced me of the true diſtinction between the Jews and Ebionites; which will beſides ſhew the propriety of what I have put into crotchets, to elucidate the paſſage from Origen: Barnabas ſays, "If any one ſhould preach, that the God "of the Law and the Prophets to be one, but ſhould "deny that *Chriſt was to be the Son of God*, he is a "liar, as well as his father the devil: and ſuch an "one is a Pſeudo-Jew, of the earthly circumciſion." [that is, he was an unbelieving Hebrew] "If any one "ſhould confeſs Jeſus Chriſt to be Lord or Maſter "κυριον, but ſhould deny the God of the Law and the "Prophets; ſaying, that the Maker of the heaven and "the earth was not to be the Father of the Chriſt; "ſuch an one ſtandeth not in the truth, in like manner as his father the devil: and ſuch an one is the "diſciple of Simon the Magician, and not of the "Holy Spirit." [Simon we know was a Jew, and preached Jeſus only (See p. 387); therefore this perſon

* See Preface.

was

was a Nazarene.] "If any one indeed ſhould ſay there "is one God, and confeſs Jeſus alſo to be the Chriſt, "but ſhould think the Lord or Maſter (κυριον) to be a "*mere man*, and not the only begotten God, and *Wiſ-* "*dom*, and God-Word *, but ſhould think that he only "conſiſted of ſoul and body: ſuch an one is a ſer- "pent, preaching fraud and deceit, for the perdition "of men: and ſuch an one is defective in underſtand- "ing, as Ebion is called." When theſe paſſages are conſidered, together with the many others ſcattered throughout this work, there can remain no doubt concerning the true diſtinction between the unbelieving Hebrews, the believing Jews, and Ebionites. That the believing Jews were the genuine diſciples of Jeſus, and perhaps derived their appellation from him, I think, cannot be diſputed; that the Ebionæan Sect were the precurſors of the Catholics is highly probable.

* Ignatius is made to ſay Λογον Θεω, Word of God; but it is an error, it is heretical: it ſhould be Λογον Θεον. See Semler's Diſſ. in Tert. v. 5. p. 233.

That

That when the Catholics had arrived at their high-flying notion of Jesus, their Christ, being the Son of God, and equal to the Father, they then began to distinguish their former companions by the epithet of Ebionæan, signifying poverty, if taken from the Hebrew tongue, on account of their being literal expounders of the Hebrew text, or expounding it according to the poverty. At other times they supposed that they obtained this appellation from a Stoic Philosopher, called Ebion, though no such person had ever existed, to avoid the absurdity of *Gentile* believers having been thus distinguished by Gentile Christians from a term of the *Hebrew language*, of which the generality of them knew nothing, and therefore incapable of enjoying the sting conveyed by the nickname. The Ebionæans, besides, holding a corporeal belief, and frequenting the Christian places of worship, which believing Jews never did, farther evinces their being the precursors of the Christians.

Another appellation of the Jews was *Christicides*, or Christ killers; for instance, such as believed him to be a mere man, and not the Messiah. The Ebionites,

nites, who thought him to be the Meſſiah or Chriſt, held him to be ſomething more than a *mere* man, and therefore the appellation of Chriſticide, does not apply to them, *Ebionites*, who are particularly diſtinguiſhed from the *believing Jews* by this writer, as we have juſt ſeen.

To diſcover the general opinions of theſe firſt, and of courſe, true believers in Jeſus, attention ſhould be paid to the treatiſe of Origen againſt Celſus, but particularly to Celſus's objections in the firſt book, as it may be preſumed, from Origen's taxing him with a breach of the Proſopopœia, or decorum of character, in the beginning of the ſecond, that till then, Celſus's Nazarene ſpoke agreeably to the character of ſuch an one. Alſo to Juſtin Martyr's Dialogue with Trypho the Jew—and to what Irenæus has advanced againſt the Jews who were, according to Theodoret, Nazarenes. What I have advanced in the firſt Part concerning the Nazarenes and Ebionites, being only two appellations of the ſame ſect, is groundleſs; which, however, by no means affects the juſtneſs of my charge of perverſion againſt the late Mr. Badcock's repreſentation of Jerome's letter, Part firſt, page 200.

Having at laſt diſcovered the true appellation of

thoſe believers in Jeſus, who held that he was only a *mere man*, and not at all the Meſſiah, or Chriſt: in order to make out to the ſatisfaction of my reader, that ſuch believers were his genuine, unſophiſticated followers, three things I apprehend are neceſſary to be ſhewn; and before which a rational man ſhould entertain his doubts. The *firſt* is to evince by undoubted teſtimony, that they were the *moſt ancient* believers in Jeſus: and that the other ſects were *ſchiſmatics* from them in the firſt inſtance, though theſe afterwards might have ſplit into other ſchiſms among themſelves. *Secondly*, That the Jews conſtituted the *majority* of the believers in Jeſus, not only from the very firſt, which would ſuffice for my argument, but alſo for ſeveral centuries after. If both theſe points can be evinced, methinks, he will be more than a rational ſceptic, who will entertain any dubiety upon the point in queſtion. But I by no means infer from this, that a rational ſceptic ſhould not farther demand, abſtractedly of a faith perfectly agreeable to the moſt cultivated human mind, and *within the reach of all mankind*, two *ſine qua nons* in my apprehenſion, the moſt cogent reaſons to believe that Jeſus was a divine Meſſenger, or no impoſtor.

impoſter. Concerning this laſt point, before the publication of my *Harmony of the Goſpels*, I ſhall not ſay that I ſhall be able to adduce arguments ſufficiently cogent to ſatisfy him: though I am myſelf ſatisfied that he was not an impoſtor. But in regard of the two others, I think I ſhall ſatisfy him. Though my reader can have no doubt, that a ſubſequent volume, containing obſervations on the Primitive Fathers, and Origen, Joſephus, and Philo the Jew, and perhaps ſome of the Heathen writers of the firſt and ſecond centuries, will afford farther arguments in ſupport of them, if what I ſhall now ſay be well founded.

That the firſt appellation of the followers of Jeſus was *Jews*, is evinced from the acknowledgment of Peter, in the forty-ninth ſection of the third book of the Recognitions, that Simon the magician was one of the diſciples of John the Baptiſt; and that he preached Jeſus before himſelf. Farther, that he had *ſucceeded* Doſitheus, another of John's diſciples. Now, that theſe two perſons were not Gnoſtics according to what Epiphanius and other Chriſtians report, is evident from the expreſs teſtimonies of Firmilian and Cyprian, ſo frequently referred to: and, in confirma-

tion

tion of their teſtimonies, we do not find any alluſion to the Gnoſtic hereſy, either in *the Shepherd* or *Hermas*, or in the *Travels of Peter*, or the ſeven laſt books of the *Recognitions*; which cannot otherwiſe be accounted for, conſidering the length of theſe works, then by admitting that this hereſy exiſted *in no form* at the time when theſe writings were publiſhed. For, as is well known to the learned, and of which I have adduced inſtances myſelf, there is no writing aſcribed to the *Apoſtolical* Fathers, however ſhort, which is not filled with frequent alluſions to the *Docete* hereſy; and which I ſhall alſo evince in regard of the *primitive* Fathers alſo, or thoſe who are ſuppoſed to have flouriſhed in the ſecond century; but whoſe writings, abounding with alluſions to the Sabellian and Manichean hereſies, evince them to be productions of the latter end of the third century.

Farther, Epiphanius and the later Fathers make Simon the Magician to be the propounder of the Gnoſtic hereſy: how comes it then, that in the *Periodos*, a work cited by Origen, and which muſt have been well known to Chriſtian eccleſiaſtics, and which was alſo read in the congregations of the faithful up-

wards

wards of a century before Epiphanius, Peter does not charge Simon with the Gnoſtic extravagant notion concerning Chriſt? On the contrary, he ſays, he preached Jeſus *. The learned know what that means; that is, that he denied he was the God-Word, or Meſſiah. Hence it follows, that the extravagant notions of Manes, perhaps greatly exaggerated (but of this another time), were imputed to thoſe feigned perſonages, ſuch as Simon the Magician, Doſitheus, Ptolomeus (for ſuch I preſume they were) whom the Chriſtians had *before* held forth as the propounders of a ſyſtem the direct oppoſite; that is, that Jeſus was only a *mere* man: whereas the Gnoſtics held, that Chriſt was *all* God. Moreover, Simon taught, as a thing ſelf evident, one almighty and all-perfect Being †.

My ſecond argument, in proof that *Jews* was the original appellation of the followers of Jeſus, is, that the Fathers themſelves acknowledge that the *Ebionites* exiſted in the Apoſtolic age, who are ſaid to be *Jews*. This evinces they were ſchiſmatic Jews, or Jews who entertained peculiar notions, not acknowledged by

* Rec. x. 64. Hom. xi. 35, whence it alſo appears he was a Jew.

† Ib. ii. 53.

thoſe

thoſe from whom they had ſeparated. Thus we ſay the Quakers are Proteſtants, having ſome common notions; but which phraſeology infers that *Proteſtantiſm* exiſted before *Quakeriſm*.

Thirdly, That *Jews* was the original appellation of the followers of Jeſus, is farther evinced from the Chriſtians themſelves having been ſo called. Upon this head, independently of the teſtimony of all antiquity, we have that of the New Teſtament. Nay, that they were ſo diſtinguiſhed, after they had taken up the fooliſh notion of Jeſus having been the Chriſt or Meſſiah, muſt be admitted from the perpetual diſputes which ſubſiſted among the Jews, for which reaſon it is mentioned by Suetonius they were baniſhed from Rome in the reign of Claudius. But it does not appear that among the Jews who believed Jeſus to be a mere man there were any diſputes: no, nor among the unbelieving Hebrews. But that between the Jews who believed Jeſus to be a mere man, and between Chriſtians, there exiſted an antipathy far exceeding that which prevailed between theſe latter and the unbelieving Hebrews, appears from the paſſage cited, p. 332, from Ignatius: and that theſe Jews

were

were not Hebrews is evinced from the ſame paſſage, which affirms they were not *circumciſed*.

That Hebrews ſhould have been of this turbulent diſpoſition, which we find to have been ingrained in the Jews for centuries, and never having been ſo characterized either before or ſince, would evince *two* changes in their moral character, which, without *two* miracles, could not happen. Moreover, it is not to be imagined that Hebrews would be allowed, who were always a people extremely odious to other nations, but particularly ſo to the populace, to commit thoſe diſorders which we are aſſured the Jews gave riſe to in the Roman empire for centuries. But, it having been evinced that Gentile believers in the mere man Jeſus were called Jews, it behoved government what ſteps it ſhould take, where ſo many of their natural-born ſubjects, Roman citizens, would be implicated with their relations and connections.

That the Jews were far more numerous than the Chriſtians is evident from the following paſſage from the Benedictine edition of Juſtin Martyr; which is ſo very important that I ſhall give it in the original—as rendered by the Benedictine editor—and a fair tranſla-

tion. It is the firſt of one hundred and forty-ſix queſtions, or difficulties, propoſed to the Orthodox or Catholics, with their ſolution. It is perhaps a work of about the middle of the fourth century.

Εἰ τὴν ἀρχαίαν μὲν λατρείαν ἀνεῖλεν ὁ Θεὸς, ὡς αὐτὴν μὴ ἀρεσκομένος, τὴν δὲ τῶν Χριστιανῶν ὡς ἀρεστὴν αὐτῷ ἀντεισηγαγεν· οἱ δὲ ὀρθόδοξοι οἱ μόνοι Θεῷ ἀρεσκόμενοι, τῶν Ἑλλήνων τε καὶ Ἰουδαίων, καὶ πάντων τῶν αἱρετικῶν, οὐκ ἴσοι τὸν ἀριθμὸν τυγχάνουσιν, ἀλλ' ἥσσονες· τίς ἡ ἀπόδειξις τοῦ μὴ κατὰ πλουτείαν δυνάμεως τὸ ταύτην αὖτ' ἐκείνης ἑλομένῳ τὴν λατρείαν, μένειν ἀνεκριζωτον τὴν πλάνην; πῶς δὲ οὐκ ἀνωφελὴς ἡ ἐκείνης τῆς λατρείας λύσις, πλάνης ἔτι πολλῆς κατεχούσης τὸν κόσμον.

Si antiquum cultum ſuſtulit Deus, ut ſibi non placentem, ac illius loco Chriſtianum ut ſibi gratum introduxit; nec tamen Orthodoxi, qui ſoli Deo placent, Græceis, Judæis ac omnibus Hæreticis numero pares ſunt, ſed etiam pauciores; ecquod argumentum non illius, qui hunc illi cultum praetulit, penuria poteſtatis fieri, ut maneat ſeductio non eradicata? Quomodo autem non inutilis illius cultus abrogatio, multa adhuc ſeductione mundum detinente?

"If God took away the ancient worſhip, as not "not being pleaſed with it, and introduced in its "ſtead

" ſtead that of the Chriſtians, as being agreeable to
" him; yet the orthodox, who alone pleaſe God, are
" not equal in number to the Greeks, and *Jews*, and all
" the heretics, but fewer: What a proof of a want
" of power in him who preferred this worſhip to
" that, the letting error to remain unrooted up?
" But is not the abrogating of that worſhip of no
" avail, whilſt ſo general a deluſion ſtill poſſeſſes the
" world?"

The Orthodox, in his anſwer, admits the fact of the majority of Greeks and Jews; and cites Matt. xx. 16, where it is ſaid, *that many are called but few choſen*; and vii. 14. *becauſe ſtrait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*

The queſtion here to be determined is, Who were theſe Jews? Were they Hebrew unbelievers, or Gentile and Hebrew believers on Jeſus only? I apprehend that from what has been laid before the reader he can have no doubt that, in this paſſage, the perſon who queſtioned had the latter only in his eye. He calls them Jews. Sozomen calls the unbelieving Jews *Hebrews*; and clearly diſtinguiſhes them by this appella-

tion from the *believing* Jews. The Chriſtian eccleſiaſtics generally lump them together under one appellation, Jews: in doing ſo, they paid no compliment to the unbelieving Hebrews, who, as we have ſeen, preferred them to their believing brethren.

That the Jews mentioned in this paſſage were believing Jews is farther ſtrengthened from what Origen ſays in his Tract againſt Celſus, that the difference between Jews and Chriſtians conſiſted in the former denying that the Chriſt had come in the perſon of Jeſus, and the latter affirming that he had, p. 112. In the forty-third ſection of the firſt book of the Recognitions, Peter ſeems alſo to think there was no other difference between them: in the fiftieth ſection he directly affirms it. Gregory Nazianzen alſo allows, that the Orthodox were the feweſt of the tribes of Iſrael, 2*da* Or. p. 48. A. Hiſt. Op. iii. 355.

Having evinced the *higher* antiquity of the believing Jews over the Ebioneans, and Chriſtians, and of their being *more numerous* for centuries after, I ſhall now lay before the ſceptical reader a few of the tenets of thoſe believers in *Jeſus only*, which will enable him to form a true judgment

whether

whether it be probable, that ſuch tenets were likely to be acknowledged by a ſect deriving their origin from a Divine Meſſenger, as I ſuppoſe they ſaid, for as yet I have no authority for it: and though I ſhould find no authority for my ſuppoſition, my reaſons, beſides what I have already alledged, for thinking that he was an appointed Meſſenger from the Deity, will beſt appear hereafter. Firſt we are informed by St. Peter, in the Clementines, Hom. iv. Sect. 16, That Dæmons or Devils were not ſeen by the Jews—In the fourteenth ſection, he ſays, that there were Dæmons, was hidden from many: not however from the Chriſtians, who knew their ſecrets—In the nineteenth ſection he calls them *wicked Spirits, and miſchievous Dæmons.* Now as Dæmons were not ſeen by the *Jews*, and were *hidden* or unknown to many, it follows that they did not believe in their exiſtence: which if admitted, and I think cannot reaſonably be denied, it will evince that all thoſe relations concerning Dæmons which we have in the Goſpels, and other books of the New Teſtament, are only Chriſtian *lies.* What farther evinces that the Nazarenes entirely denied the exiſtence of evil ſpirits, is, that Juſtin Martyr admits

there

there were ſome (the Hebrews) who denied, that there were even good angels, and that thoſe appearances recorded in the Bible, were only temporary and occaſional; being like rays of light which were drawn into the Subſiſtence from which they iſſued, without having ever been at all ſeparated from it. If therefore they denied the exiſtence of good angels, it may, *a fortiori*, be concluded that they alſo denied the exiſtence of evil ones; as Peter, I think, affirms.

Celſus's Nazarene denied the deſcent of the Holy Spirit in the ſhape of a dove, and the voice from heaven proclaiming Jeſus to be the *Son of God*. Ed. Spencer, p. 31. The Nazarenes were Hebrew Jews, or believers.

Ib. p. 46. Celſus's Jew did not believe that Herod had plotted any thing againſt the life of Jeſus, and knew nothing of the flight into Egypt.

Ib. p. 60. Denied the reſurrection and future judgment, and that ſouls were immortal. Rec. lib. ii. 13.

Ib. p. 112. The Nazarene denies that Jeſus foretold what happened to himſelf.—P. 130, not even his reſurrection *.

* Having read the treatiſe of Origen againſt Celſus, in Spencer's edition, I am at preſent obliged to quote it only.

I have

I have alſo met with a paſſage, but omitted either at the time to note it, or loſt or miſlaid the paper where I remarked it, that the Jews denied that Jeſus was even crucified. And it muſt be allowed, that if the Deity employed human means to declare his will to man, that, *prima facie*, it is not reaſonable to think that he would have pitched upon a perſon who was to be *crucified*. Moſes was not crucified. But Chriſtians will have it that this was clearly foretold by the prophets of the Old Teſtament. Doubtleſs, it is very clearly foretold in paſſages of this book; but then the Jews excepted againſt the authority of a book which they held to be a perfect miſinterpretation of their ſacred or rather hiſtoric writings. But to cut this matter ſhort, both Jews and Hebrews denied that there was any other prophet beſides Moſes.

There cannot be a groſſer error than to ſuppoſe that the Chriſtians in the early age of the Church, that is the heads of them, were a ſet of illiterate, ignorant wretches: they were the very reverſe: they were the moſt refined politicians. Without committing themſelves, they deputed, throughout the world, credulous men who preached eternal torments againſt

all

all mankind, at the ſame time aſſuring their hearers that they were in poſſeſſion of an univerſal panicea, pardon the expreſſion, which terrified the people, who love to be terrified, provided there be a remedy at hand; whilſt the inviſible heads were buſily employed, chiefly at Alexandria, the moſt learned city at this time in the world, and where the *Jews* chiefly abounded, in compoſing books, and aſcribing them to diſtant ages and perſons; and if they belonged to thoſe ages, muſt, doubtleſs, be held to be prophetical, which was credited by their credulous converts, though held in contempt by all perſons of common ſenſe. Independently of the ſecond and third books of the Recognitions, which diſplay the hand of a maſter, the writings aſcribed to Joſephus and Philo Judæus ſufficiently evince it; and that paſſages have been interpolated in ſome of the Heathen writers, who are ſuppoſed to have flouriſhed before the *ſuppoſed* age of Jeſus, I entertain no manner of doubt whatever. When the Chriſtians got poſſeſſion of the imperial power, it became then their chief object to deſtroy thoſe writings of the Heathens of the firſt, ſecond, and third centuries, which would have perhaps pourtrayed them

in their true colours: and even of thoſe writers, who flouriſhed after Theodoſius and his ſons, and who treated of the firſt, ſecond, and third centuries, ſuch parts of their works were expreſsly deſtroyed, leſt poſterity (ſenſible of the ſhocking arts of the *primitive* Chriſtians) might be induced to pull down the artificial fabric of Chriſtianity. Neither do I believe that poſterity has any great chance of recovering the invaluable writings which treat of this period. Perhaps in Arabia, whither the remnant of the Jews who eſcaped the perſecuting ſword of the Emperors, incited thereto by their own bigotry and fanaticiſm, and unrelenting prieſts, we have the beſt chance of diſcovering thoſe writings which were compoſed after the eruption of Veſuvius in 79. I apprehend there is little chance of recovering them in the Oaſis of Egypt. Theſe iſlands in the Sandy Deſert between Egypt and Lybia, were, I apprehend, a principal retreat of the Monks in thoſe ages, the determined enemies of Heathen learning.

If the Jews were obliged to flee their country, they were perhaps the means of Mahomet and his ſucceſſors avenging them of their enemies; for it is ſaid, that one of his chief adviſers was a Jew.

Concerning their belief I ſhall give it in the words of Peter: "The doctrine of thoſe Jews whom you "call Barbarians is moſt pious, as they hold one Fa-"ther and Demiurg, or Maker of every thing, by "nature good and juſt: good, as pardoning peni-"tents their tranſgreſſions: juſt, as rendering to "each, upon repentance, according to the merit of "his actions." Clementines, Hom. iv. Sect. 13.

If Chriſtianity has any thing, beſides what is here mentioned, valuable in it, I profeſs myſelf ignorant of it. But there is this material difference between the two faiths: a Chriſtian, to entertain this rational hope upon the *principles of Chriſtianity*, muſt, at the ſame time, firmly believe in a number of abſurd contradictions, or incomprehenſibilities, repugnant to the common ſenſe of every perſon: which occaſions many to found their hope of ſalvation upon believing that which no one, as being incomprehenſible or abſurd, can believe; or as the Heathens not inaptly expreſs it, that Chriſtianity conſiſted *in exceſs of belief*.

Biſhop Horſley and Dr. Prieſtley are agreed upon one point; namely, that the belief which the firſt Hebrew converts of Jeſus entertained was the true be-

lief.

lief. If theſe Gentlemen are candid in what they ſay, they ſhould immediately acknowledge that Chriſtianity muſt be a deluſion, ſeeing that no Hebrew ever was a Chriſtian; but, on the contrary, that thoſe Hebrews, who acknowledged Jeſus, were more inimical to Chriſtians than the *unbelieving* Hebrews, but particularly thoſe of the Heathens who were proſelyted by them *.

To expect that any writer of celebrity ſhould openly embrace an opinion the direct oppoſite of that which he had before contended for, is ſcarcely to be expected. Biſhop Horſley's ſituation, to ſay no more, precludes all hope. But I profeſs there is ſo much openneſs and candour in Dr. Prieſtley, that he is perhaps the firſt among the learned who, I think, will be brought to change his former opinions.

We are farther informed, in Origen's Tract againſt Celſus, p. 271. that the Nazarenes were literal expoſitors of Scripture. In this they materially differed from the Catholics: theſe affirmed that the Letter *killed*, but the Spirit gave *life*. I would not think of alluding to this circumſtance, were it not that, per-

* Juſtin Martyr, p. 399. Thirlby.

haps, it might induce Biſhop Horſley to pay ſome attention to what theſe Hebrew believers had advanced: for, in this reſpect, they entirely agreed with his Lordſhip; who, with obvious propriety, has laid it down, that the obvious meaning of Scripture is its true meaning: though it muſt be admitted, that in this he *differs* from the Catholics of old, who, as the framers of theſe writings, ſhould be deemed to be the beſt judges of their true meaning. This eſſential difference between his Lordſhip and the ancient Catholics ſhould, methinks, induce him either to profeſs himſelf a Nazarene, or to acknowledge, as a Catholic, that the letter of Scripture *killed*. At preſent his Lordſhip cannot be ſaid to be either a Catholic or a Nazarene, but in ſome unfounded medium between them.

Dr. Prieſtley, and the Unitarians, alſo contend for the *literal* expoſition of Scripture, though it muſt be acknowledged that their reaſonings on this head are frequently very forced and unnatural; not to mention their diſſatisfaction with our preſent MS. However, I think the fact ought to inſiſt upon Dr. Prieſtley's producing ſome ONE of the ancient Fathers who underſtood Scripture as he expounds it, for the firſt one

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thouſand years after Chriſt, and I think I might add another five hundred. If he cannot ſhew that he is ſupported by at leaſt ONE of them, I apprehend that he will find himſelf between the horns of a dilemma; either by boldly maintaining that the ancient Fathers did not underſtand their own language (the New Teſtament) as well as he does, which I believe few perſons of any ſenſe, unleſs extremely bigotted, will allow; or affirming, that he himſelf is inſpired by the Holy Spirit: this I apprehend none will diſpute with him. But to ſay, that any ſect of Chriſtians muſt have expounded in the manner in which he does, ti[illegible] he adduces paſſages from their writings that they did ſo, is a mere *gratis dictum* which bigots only can ſwallow, a *petitio principii* that muſt revolt every perſon of common ſenſe.

We are informed, in the ſame page of Origen's Tract, that St. Paul was converted from the Jewiſh to the Chriſtian faith. Query, Will not this elucidate a very great difficulty in the Acts of the Apoſtles? namely, of St. Paul's being a Jew—a Roman—a citizen of Tarſus, and born at Tarſus. Acts xxi. & xxii. See Lardner, vol. i. p. 224—229—form. ed. p. 501.

where

where the reader will be amuſed with modern ingenuity. The difficulty is, how a perſon could be a Jew, and a Roman, and be born at Tarſus; which *not* being a Roman colony, a perſon born there was not neceſſarily a Roman citizen. What miſled the moderns was the ſuppoſing, that *Jew* and *Hebrew* were equivalent terms: but that they were not *neceſſarily* ſo, has been already evinced: ſo that Paul, if born of Roman parents, though at Tarſus, if firſt converted to the faith of the mere man Jeſus, or to the mere man Jeſus the Meſſiah, or Chriſt; in the firſt caſe, he would have been literally a Jew, and a Roman; in the ſecond, an *Ebionite*, and a Roman: and if he forſook this ſect, and became a believer in Jeſus the Meſſiah and God-Word, he would have been (though in the eyes of his countrymen, or fellow-citizens, a Jew, as in the firſt caſe, before theſe ſects were diſtinguiſhed by different appellations) a Roman citizen, and a Chriſtian. Farther, it is my opinion, that the prototype of St. Paul, for I own I am not ſo credulous as to ſuppoſe that ſuch a perſon ever exiſted, went through all theſe mutations in his faith: namely, that he was a Roman, we have his own word; that he was a Jew, we

have

have the ſame teſtimony: but *no* Hebrew could be a Roman citizen, particularly a poor tent-maker*. That he was an Ebionite may be fairly inferred from their deteſtation of him, declaring, that he was neither a good man nor an honeſt man, but an *apoſtate*. We ſeldom, I apprehend, call perſons *apoſtates*, unleſs when they forſake the faith which we ourſelves profeſs. If then he had ever been an Ebionite, which I think cannot now be diſputed, it further proves that he was not a Hebrew, for none of that nation ever believed Jeſus to be the Chriſt, which was the diſtinguiſhing tenet between the Jews and Ebionites. And now I profeſs I am not aſhamed to acknowledge an opinion which I early communicated to a learned gentleman for whom I have a high eſteem, that Peregrinus the philoſopher, whoſe hiſtory Lucian has ſo pleaſantly related, was the prototype of Paul, or rather the real Paul. Not that I ſuppoſe that any of the books of the New Teſtament, as we *now* have them, which are aſcribed to

* I know that the teſtimonies of Joſephus and Philo are againſt me upon this point; but I have already obſerved, before I even thought of conſidering this difficulty, that the writings aſcribed to them are Chriſtian forgeries; and upon this head I ſhall object to every teſtimony except Roman.

Paul,

Paul, were written by Peregrinus. There are plain allusions in them to the Manichean, or Docete Heresy, which evince that these passages are interpolations. For to suppose, with Bishop Horsley, that the Apostles wrote proleptically, besides being unsupported by any, except modern, authority that I know of, is directly contrary to what Peter advances *, and also what Justin Martyr says †, who besides quotes Matthew *(the law and the prophets were* until *John the Baptist)* to support his opinion: so that his Lordship, and the Christians, must prove the existence of the *Docete* Heresy, in the first century of Christianity, which perhaps will be found somewhat troublesome against the express testimonies of Firmilian and Cyprian; or acknowledge the spuriousness of these Epistles in this particular. That Peregrinus finished his romantic career by burning himself on a funeral pile, accounts very well for the abrupt termination of the History of St. Paul, noticed by all Christians. The Christians perhaps found it convenient to slur over this part of the history.

* Recog. l. i. sect. 48. † P. 241. Thirlby.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, the Jews were alſo what is commonly called *Optimiſts:* that is, they held that the Deity, by means of Evil, elicited the greateſt poſſible Good. This notion I believe to be well founded: to affirm the contrary neceſſarily tends to Atheiſm.

Concerning the private virtues of the Jews, we have the unimpeachable evidence of the Emperor Julian, already cited, for their being induſtrious. This prince, who was himſelf more induſtrious, or rather more upon the ſtretch, than perhaps any one of the millions of his ſubjects, muſt be allowed to be a proper judge of induſtry. If the Maſſalians will be allowed to be only another appellation for Jews, which I think cannot be diſputed; we ſhall then have the teſtimony of Epiphanius to the ſame fact. It is true, that Chriſtians, even Preſbyters, and the lower orders or the clergy, were enjoined to be induſtrious, and not devour what was intended for the relief of the poor and the diſtreſſed, and probably were ſo. But from the Jews having no poor at all among them, it follows, that they were more induſtrious than the Chriſtians who had

ſome, though certainly comparatively few in proportion to the Heathens.

With regard to charitable offices, there was no compariſon between the two ſects. The Jews, as we are informed in the Clementine Epitome, ſect. 151, acted kindly towards the children of their implacable unrelenting enemies, the foul-mouthed, hypocritical Chriſtians, who were daily trumping up lying ſtories concerning them; ſee Epiphanius, who wrote about the ſame time with the author of the Clementine Epitome, as I have elſewhere ſhewn. The Chriſtians, on the contrary, deemed their children to be polluted, when ſo treated by the Jews.

The Jews kept the Jewiſh Sabbath (Saturday): that is, they had regular devotional meetings on that day; how they ſpent the remaining part of it, as yet I have met with nothing to determine me. The Chriſtians themſelves for ſome centuries had their devotional meetings both on this day and Sunday. This circumſtance alone will ſatisfy the candid reader, that Chriſtians were originally ſchiſmatics from the Jews: for, notwithſtanding the ſeparation and hatred which ſubſiſted between theſe rival ſects, it required centuries

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to prepare the people for the change of the day of worſhip; or rather to lay aſide the originally appointed day.

I profeſs there ſtill remains one difficulty, which will ſurely occur to the ſceptical reader, and of courſe create doubts which, unleſs ſatisfactorily ſolved, may have ſufficient weight to make him perſiſt in his former way of thinking whatever it was; namely, how it came to paſs that the Jews, who were more numerous, I believe far more numerous than the Chriſtians—and who were, according to the Chriſtians themſelves, perſons of learning, and of ſuch good taſte, as to make the chief objects of their ſtudy thoſe authors who are the delight of the preſent, and the two or three paſt, centuries—ſhould be ſo totally overwhelmed, I may ſay extirpated, by the Chriſtians, that even the memory of them has been entirely loſt: inſomuch that, wherever the appellation Jew is met with in an ancient author, the learned have univerſally, I apprehend, ſuppoſed, that by it was meant an unbelieving Hebrew. The prejudice in this caſe has been ſo ſtrong, that when the ſuppoſition muſt make the author expreſs himſelf in the moſt abſurd manner, yet

this has been thought ſtill leſs improbable than that by Jew the author intended a Gentile believer in Jeſus, or a Nazarene. We have had a notable inſtance of this in what has been firſt obſerved concerning St. Paul's being a *Roman*—a *citizen* of Tarſus—a *Jew*—and a *Chriſtian*.

I impute their almoſt total extinction to the eccleſiaſtical polity early introduced among Chriſtians, and nearly perfected in the reigns of Theodoſius the Great and his ſons. The outline of this polity was this. In every city, or conſiderable town, there was a biſhop; under him there were twelve preſbyters, who were his council, who might controul him; but who could not do any thing without his approbation: beſides theſe, there were a parcel of young deacons, and deaconeſſes. Theſe were elderly women, who as ſuch might enter without ſuſpicion into the houſes of ſuch as they ſuppoſed fit for their purpoſe, either from weakneſs of underſtanding, or from credulity reſulting from goodneſs of heart, which eaſily made them the dupes of deſigning people. Let us now ſuppoſe that ſome weak woman acknowledged herſelf ready to enter into the congregation of the ſaints. Firſt, perhaps,

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ſhe is privately viſited by the biſhop, or a preſbyter, according to her rank, who encourages her in her pious intention, and informs her that ſhe muſt attend their nightly meetings. In a little time ſhe is informed, that without baptiſm there can be no ſalvation: ſhe therefore propoſes to undergo the operation, for ſuch it may well be called, ſeeing that ſhe was to be three times dipped entirely under water, in the name of the Father—and in the name of the Son—and in the name of the Holy Spirit. The biſhop might then obſerve to her, that it was the rule of the Church that each perſon, before baptiſm, ſhould ſerve a noviciate of *three* years. The woman, conſidering the uncertainty of life, might be ſhocked at this information. The biſhop, however, might hint to her, there were *ways* by which this period might be ſhortened. The poor creature, terrified with the dread of eternally broiling in the flames of hell, would, it may be eaſily imagined, gladly enquire the means. The biſhop might then obſerve to her, that ſhe had a virgin daughter, who ought to be converted to the faith, and who hereafter might be expected to govern her huſband. From maternal influence, with a little art, it may be

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eaſily ſuppoſed that the daughter would not be a difficult conqueſt, which would be facilitated from the deſire of gratifying her curioſity, by being preſent at their midnight aſſemblies, from which ſhe would be excluded before ſhe was declared a Catechumen. The daughter, we ſhall ſuppoſe, is added to the Catechumens; the mother claims the reward. The biſhop then informs her, that what ſhe has done is very well; but, as we are all ſinners, what ſhe had performed could only be deemed a ſmall reparation for her offences againſt her Maker: and if ſhe truly deſired to become ONE of the faithful, why does not ſhe convert her huſband whom ſhe loves, and who otherwiſe will be eternally broiling in hell: well as ſhe loves her huſband, knowing, as we may ſafely infer from the Fathers, with what abhorrence Chriſtianity and its precepts were held in by the Gentile Heathens, and perhaps particularly ſo by her huſband; the idea of converting him muſt appear ſo deſperate, as almoſt to make her deſpair; however ſhe muſt try. Having received her leſſon from the biſhop (though in truth women are ſeldom at a loſs concerning the fitteſt means of bringing their huſbands to act agreeably to their will),

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we ſhall ſuppoſe then that Madam finds it difficult to eat: the huſband, finding her continue in this humour, enquires the cauſe, when, perhaps after many dark hints, ſhe informs him, that in conſequence of her profeſſion of faith, ſhe holds it to be ſinful to eat at the ſame table with an unbeliever. With what aſtoniſhment and horror ſuch intelligence would be received, it is needleſs to point out: but when he found that his children were of the ſame way of thinking as their mother, what muſt his feelings be! To attempt to convince them of their folly, would be to ſuppoſe them endowed with common ſenſe, and therefore preposterous. What was the poor huſband to do? Perhaps after ſtorming a while, and ſending Chriſtianity, its biſhops and prieſts to their burning hell, madam might humbly obſerve, that it was true, that ſhe was only a weak woman, who did not underſtand matters, but where is the harm, adds ſhe, of embracing Chriſtianity? However improbable, or even impoſſible as you ſay it is, nevertheleſs it may be true; for frequently things apparently impoſſible are found to be otherwiſe. And ſhould it be true, a great benefit, everlaſting life, is to be gained: and ſhould it turn out

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to be falſe, we are no worſe than we were. Why therefore, my firſt and only Love, will not you ſo far oblige me, as to profeſs a faith which cannot hurt you: but, on the contrary, may be the means of obtaining for you unſpeakable happineſs, independently of the obligation which you will for ever lay me under; beſides its being the only means of reſtoring harmony in your family. To purſue this theme further is unneceſſary. Every one muſt ſee in general how the buſineſs would moſt likely terminate. And that this is no exaggeration of the mode employed by the antient Chriſtians for proſelyting the Heathens, will be evident to the attentive reader of the Recognitions and the Clementines. The learned reader is particularly referred to, Hom. xv. ſect. 2.

That the ancients reſiſted theſe artifices for ſeveral centuries, till further ſupported by the perſecuting arm of government, is ſtrongly indicative of the good ſenſe of the ancients, when compared to that of Britons, and their deſcendants, in every region of the globe, who have been, as Dr. Prieſtley ſays, *miraculouſly* made the dupes of canting ignorant Methodiſts: who, however, in their movements, follow the tracts

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of the primitive Chriſtians, their true prototypes, as far as I am capable of judging. Farther, this *miraculous* converſion to the Methodiſtical faith entirely *unnerves* the Doctor's ſuppoſed invincible argument againſt Mr. Gibbon, from effect to cauſe, unleſs he allows that the Methodiſts can perform miracles, which I have not as yet underſtood they pretend to. This converſion ſtill farther evinces that real miracles were not neceſſary for the ſupport of Chriſtianity; lying ones anſwered perfectly. But concerning my ſyſtem, that the rational faith of the Jews was embraced by ſo many Gentiles from hated Hebrews, who muſt have been ſatisfied of its truth, the argument from effect to cauſe I apprehend to be invincible; but of this another time.

As already obſerved, had the biſhops been always choſen from among the Preſbyters, the Eccleſiaſtical polity muſt have bound, to all human appearance, mankind to all eternity in its ghoſtly fetters. For the Preſbyters having a view to their own future exaltation, would never think of oppoſing with effect their biſhop. But ſtrangers, by means of undue influence, having been frequently placed in the Epiſcopal Sees, the

ſanguineneſs of the inferior members was neceſſarily blunted, and at times did oppoſe the nomination, and thus created ſchiſm where ſubmiſſion depended ſolely upon opinion. Such a junto of intriguing prieſts, in all the great towns and cities, with the numbers of their deluded followers, would be, and was ſo ſtrong when ſupported a little while by government, as to encourage its rulers to take violent ſteps, not only againſt the unconverted Heathens, but even their diſſenting brethren. And though the Catholics themſelves, while a weak and deſpiſed ſect, preached moſt ſtrenuouſly for moderation and toleration, and cited Scripture in ſupport of what they advanced, yet when they became ſufficiently powerful to influence government, they maintained the neceſſity, and indeed the *charity*, of compelling by force all Diſſenters to enter into their communion, and readily diſcovered paſſages of Scripture to ſupport them. Nay, though preachers of paſſive obedience unlimitedly, aud quoting St. Paul in ſupport of this being one of the Chriſtian tenets; yet, when princes oppoſed their will, though the ſubject in diſpute had ever ſo little relation with ghoſtly concerns, they never failed impreſſing their deluded followers with

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the idea that religion was the real object of the diſpute; and when they had accompliſhed this, the monarch, unleſs he ſubmitted, would be ſerved as Saul was by Samuel, who with his poſterity were deprived of their throne which was transferred to others. This has been frequently the caſe in Europe within the laſt ſeven hundred years. Nay, had Chriſtian prieſts put their kings to death with their own hands, they could, in their juſtification, cite the example of the ſame Samuel and Ahag. And however ſtrange it may appear, theſe inſtances are frequently cited by the Fathers, as evincing the powers of biſhops and prieſts. So dangerous is it to permit any ſpecies of fanatiſm to get to a head.

That the concealed movers in this diabolical buſineſs were perſons of conſummate abilities, is clearly evinced from the *Praxeis*, or *Acts of Peter*, now in a great meaſure comprized in the ſecond and third books of the Recognitions. The effect therefore is only equal to the cauſe. When Chriſtianity became the court religion, the rulers of the church, ere they attempted to enſlave mankind, prepared them for it by degrees; firſt by laying it down as a principle, that

without the conſent of the Biſhop of Rome, nothing could be determined upon in general councils. As this neceſſarily led to the eſtabliſhing the deſpotiſm of the Roman Biſhop, its not being oppoſed by the other biſhops, is to be aſcribed to the apprehenſion of the Catholics, leſt an Arian prince aſcending the Imperial throne, their faith ſhould be anathematized by a council of Arian biſhops; ſo that in fact, the eſtabliſhing this principle, was the conſtituting an *imperium in imperio*, which in the caſe of Vigilius gave Juſtinian ſo much trouble, notwithſtanding the many advantages he derived from his ſituation, partly to overcome; and was the real cauſe of tthe ſeparation between the Eaſtern and Weſtern churches. This principle being advanced, during the perſecution of the Arian princes, who ſucceeded Conſtantine the Great in the Eaſtern empire, was perhaps not finally acknowledged till the reign of Arcadius, Theodoſius the ſecond, or perhaps that of Marcian: and evinces, that their miniſters, who did not withſtand ſuch a principle with all the weight of government, were perſons of little political foreſight.

Secondly, The inſtitution of Monks and Nuns greatly forwarded the cauſe of Chriſtianity. The auſterity

auſterity of their lives affected the weak and the ignorant, whilſt both readily ſwallowed the abſurd miracles *ſaid* to be performed by them, and even by their relics or bones.

Thirdly, The liberality of the Chriſtian Church towards the poor; which the tythes, firſt fruits, and offerings of the faithful, enabled it to ſupport.

Laſtly and chiefly, The preaching of the Chriſtian clergy: for, as it has been amply evinced in our time, it matters little what the doctrine propounded be, if ſet off with a certain kind of pulpit eloquence, it will ſurely ſucceed.

To conclude, the writing inſcribed *Hermas* or *the Shepherd*, and the ſpurious writings aſcribed to Clemens Romanus, namely, the *Recognitions* and *Clementine* Homilies, having at one time been included among the books of the New Teſtament, and as ſuch having been read in the devotional aſſemblies of the faithful, arguments founded upon thoſe writings ſhould be held to be far more concluſive concerning the early ſtate of Chriſtianity, than even upon that of all the later Fathers, did they advance any thing in contradiction to them. For writings, publicly recited in the manner theſe were, are teſtified to be true by large aſſemblies of men in every country in which Chriſtianity was known:

known: whereas individuals may err in their relations; nay, may *lie*, as I ſhall have hereafter occaſion to evince in regard of Dionyſius, the learned biſhop of Alexandria.

This obſervation I have thought neceſſary to make, leſt it ſhould be objected againſt me, that arguments founded on ſpurious writings, compoſed by the Lord knows who, ought to be diſregarded: though this argument may be eaſily retorted againſt Chriſtians, ſhould they attempt to argue from the New Teſtament, till they prove who wrote it: for, that thoſe writings aſcribed to Clemens Romanus were compoſed by him, we have more poſitive and better evidence than that any *one* book of the New Teſtament was compoſed by the perſon to whom it is inſcribed.

The Author truſts that ſome inaccuracies of expreſſion will be forgiven him by the ingenous, when the difficulty is conſidered of neatly expreſſing one's ſelf in diſcuſſing ſubjects entirely unknown; and of ſuch importance, that to poſtpone laying them before the Public, till he could clothe them in a more elegant dreſs, he would deem highly culpable.

The reader is requeſted to correct the following errors.

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I have obſerved, p. 46, of the *Preliminary Diſquiſition*, that Sabellius was *depoſed*. This is an error. His opinion was not condemned expreſsly until the ſecond General Council, A. D. 381. See the *Nomocanon of Photius*.

FIRST PART.

P. 197. Vel eorum quos *vulgo* Nazaræos nuncupant, " means, " or of thoſe Ebionites whom they *vulgarly*, " i. e. not truly, call Nazarenes."

The two leaves wanting, after p. 186. were intentionally taken away by the author: they related to the Neſtorian hereſy: his knowledge of which hereſy being grounded upon what our Engliſh writers had ſaid of it at the time he compoſed them, what he had there advanced was incapable of being modified agreeably to the truth. Should the binder, through miſtake, happen to inſert them, the reader is requeſted to deſtroy them. There will be found to be no chaſm in conſequence of it.

I have preſumed, p. 427, laſt line, that the true appellation of the genuine diſciples of Jeſus among the Gentiles was *Jews*; induced to it from the Emperor Julian applying this epithet to them: however, as I do not

not recollect that I have ever met a paſſage in which they aſſumed this appellation, I entertain no doubt but that it alſo was only a nickname given them by the Heathens to render them odious and unpopular. The genuine diſciples of Jeſus aſſumed no peculiar appellation.

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FINIS.

APPENDIX, No. I.

HAVING experienced much difficulty in determining the opinions of the Humaniſt Chriſtians, I apprehend my laying before the learned reader the following extract from Marius Mercator will not be unwelcome. I have attempted an expoſition. It muſt be allowed not to be eaſy Latin. In the fourth paragraph, I have added in crotchets *non* before *negat* agreeably to the opinion of Garnerius and the Latin idiom, independently of its being without it contradictory to the ſecond, and other paragraphs in the ſame diſſertation, and is therefore by that learned critic ſuppoſed to have been caſually omitted.

Paulus autem Samoſatenus, qui fuit Antiochiæ Episcopus temporibus Aureliani Principis, verum eſt quidem, quod Chriſtum communiter, ut cæteri, natum hominem ex utroque parente definit; verbum autem Dei Patris, non ſubſtantivum, ſed prolativum, vel imperativum ſenſit, atque pronuntiavit, non ut

fides habet Catholica, Verbum in ſubſtantia, vel eſſentia conſubſtantivum, id eſt, ὁμοούσιον Filium dei Patris.

Photinus autem inſaniſſimo Neſtorio parem ſententiam tenuit, Verbum Dei quidem non negans eſſe in ſubſtantia; ſed hoc extrinſceus in iſto, qui ex Maria, more communi conjugum, natus eſt, Jeſu inhabitaſſe peculiariter, et omnia illa per hunc feciſſe in terris miracula, quæ in Evangeliis legimus. λογοπατορα vero, quod hic inſaniſſimus dicit, neſciens quid loquatur υιοπατορα Praxeas primus, inde poſt non multum Montanus, cum ſua Priſca et Maximilla pronuntiant.

Poſt hæc autem Sabellius et Marcellus tempore quo inpiiſſimus Arius extitit, monarchiam ſe in divinitatis ſubſtantia retinere debere putantes, nefando errore decepti, auſi ſunt Deum patrem ipſum ſibi filium, ipſum ſibi eſſe patrem, ipſum ſibi eſſe Spiritum ſanctum, ipſum incarnatum, paſſum, crucifixum, ipſum a Judæis omnia pertuliſſe, reſurrexiſſe a mortuis, et omnia peregiſſe, quæ nos per Chriſtum in perſona propria ejus, pro humani genris ſalute, geſtaſſe credimus et confitemur.

Differentia

Differentia itaque inter Samosatenum, & Photinum, ista sola est, qua Paulus Verbum Dei προσφορικον, ϗ πρακτικον λογον ϗ ενεργητικον, id est, prolativum et potestatis effectivum verbum sensit, non substantivum quod Græci ἐσιωδὲς dicunt. Photinus autem Nestorii magister Verbum quidem hoc Dei esse in substantia [non] negat, sed esse id Dei filium non vult; habitasse vero peculiariter, vel adhæsisse Christo Jesu de Joseph & Maria nato, nec quidquam hunc plus fuisse quam hominem, cum impietate delirat, qui omnes omnino homin- vitæ merito antevenerit.

Photinum Romana ecclesia, et participes hujusmodi pravitatis Homuncionitas nominat: Sabellianos vero cum antiquioribus similibus eorum, Patripassianos appellat; quia, ut dictum est, ipsum Patrem ipsum Filium sentiunt nomine unionis, qui aliquando Pater, aliquando filius, unus atque idem ipse sit sibi, etiam spiritus.

Nestorius sane a Photino auctore suo in id tantum dissentit, quod ex Virgine Maria Christum asserit natum; in reliquis vero omnibus totus ipsius sequax, signifer, antesignanus est, et in id maxime, quod supra memoratum est, Dei Verbum Dei Filium non esse, nec dici debere, nec ullum, nisi Iesum ex Maria

natum, Filium non Dei dicendum, qui templum habitantis in ſe factus, ex indiviſa inter ſe et Verbi Dei ſocietate et conjunctione hoc dici meruit, non tamen eſſe natura Filium Dei, ut qui ex hac unione divinitatis privilegia conſecutus ſit, non ea habens natura, ſed gratia. Diſs. Marii Mercatoris, ſeu app. ad contr. 12mi anathematiſmi Neſtoriani. p. 126.

"Paul of Samoſate, biſhop of Antioch, in the time of "Aurelian, confeſſed Chriſt to be begotten of two "parents as other men; he acknowledged and confeſſ- "ed the Word of God the Father, but not as having "ſubſiſtence, but prolatitious or commanding, not as "the Catholic faith is, the conſubſtantial Word in "ſubſiſtence, that is, the Homoouſian Son of God "the Father.

"Photinus held a ſimilar opinion with the moſt in- "fatuated Neſtorius, affirming indeed the word of God "to be in ſubſiſtence; but that in a peculiar manner "it inhabited, extrinſically, this Jeſus who was be- "gotten of Mary in the uſual manner, and that all "thoſe miracles which we read of in the goſpels were "performed by him [the Word] while on earth. This "infatuated wretch ſays Father-Word, not knowing "that Praxeas firſt ſaid Father-Son; ſhortly after

"whom

" whom Montanus with his Priſca and Maximilla
" confeſſed the ſame.

" The difference therefore between Photinus & the
" Samoſatenian is only this, that Paul acknowledges
" the Word of God to be the prolatitions and effec-
" tive, word of power, not the ſubſiſtencial, which the
" Greeks call *ouſiodes*. But Photinus, the maſter of Neſ-
" torius, confeſſes this Word of God to be ſubſiſten-
" cial, but that it is not the Son of God; but he impi-
" ouſly imagines that it inhabited in a peculiar man-
" ner, or adhered to Jeſus Chriſt, who was begotten
" of Joſeph and Mary, and that he was nothing more
" than a man, who by far ſurpaſſed all men in virtue.

" The Roman Church calls Photinus, and the fol-
" lowers of this ſort of impiety, Homuncionites:
" but it calls the Sabellians, with their predeceſſors
" who were like them, Patripaſſians: becauſe, as it
" was ſaid, on account of the monarchy, they think
" that the Son was the Father himſelf, who is ſome-
" times Father, ſometimes Son, being one and the
" ſame with himſelf, the Spirit in like manner.

" Neſtorius truly differs from his maſter Photinus in
" this only, that Chriſt was born of the Virgin Mary;
" but in all other things he entirely follows him, being

" his

"his ſtandard-bearer, and chiefly in that which
"we have above noticed, that the God-Word neither
"is, nor ſhould be called the Son of God, nor any other
"ſhould be called the Son of God, unleſs Jeſus that
"was born of Mary, who been the temple of the inhab-
"iting God-Word, deſerved to be ſo called from the
"inſeparable ſociety and conjunction between himſelf
"and the God-Word, not however that he was natu-
"rally the Son of God, as being one who acquired the
"rights of divinity from this union, not having them
"from nature, but from favour."

What Marius Mercator here ſays concerning Photinus muſt be deemed concluſive, notwithſtanding Theodoret ſays, that he held that the word was the energy of the Father, and that Chryſoſtom aſcribes to him the opinion of Marcellus, for neither of them, with regard to accuracy, is at all to be compared with Mercator: who had beſides the advantage of being able to read the works of Photinus in both the Greek and Latin languages, in both of which he compoſed.

The learned reader will alſo perceive that Mercator is ſilent concerning Noetus, who is, by the *ingenious* Moderns, ſuppoſed to have been the firſt

firſt propounder of the Sabellian ſentiment: and who, had he ever had a real exiſtence, and had been Biſhop of ſo conſiderable a city as Smyrna, could not have been unknown to the eminently informed Mercator, on account of his long reſidence at the city of Conſtantinople, from which Smyrna is not far diſtant.

APPENDIX, Nº. II.

Ει τις θελει σωθηναι, προ παντων χρη αυτω την καθολικην κρατησαι πιστιν· ην ει μη τις υγιη και ἀμωμον τηρησειεν, παντως ἀμφιβολιας εκτος εις τον αιωνα ἀπολειται· πιστις δε καθολικη αυτη εστιν, ινα ενα Θεον εν τριαδι, και τριαδα εν μοναδι σεβωμεν, μη τε συγχεοντες τα προσωπα, μη τε την ὑσιαν διαιρουντες. αλλη γαρ εστιν η του πατρος ὑποστασις· αλλη του υιου, και αλλη του ἁγιου πνευματος. αλλα πατρος και υιου και ἁγιου πνευματος. μια εστι θεοτης, ισα δοξα, συνδιαιωνιζουσα η μεγαλειοτης. οιος ο πατηρ, τοιουτος και ο υιος, τοιουτον και το πνευμα το ἁγιον. ακτιστος ο πατηρ [ακτιστος ο υιος] ακτιστον και το ἁγιον πνευμα. ἀμετρος ο πατηρ, ἀμετρος ο υιος, ἀμετρον και το πνευμα το ἁγιον. αιωνιος ο πατηρ, αιωνιος ο υιος, αιωνιον το ἁγιον πνευμα. και ομως ου τρεις οι αιωνιοι· αλλ' εις αιωνιος· ωσπερ ου τρεις ακτιστοι ουδε τρεις ἀμετροι, αλλ' εις ακτιστος, και εις ἀμετρος· ομοιως, παντοκρατωρ ο πατηρ, παντοκρατωρ ο υιος, παντοκρατωρ το πνευμα το ἁγιον. και ομως, ου τρεις παντοκρατορες, αλλ' εις παντοκρατωρ. ουτω Θεος ο πατηρ, Θεος ο υιος, Θεος το πνευμα το ἁγιον· αλλ' ομως ου τρεις Θεοι, αλλ' εις Θεος. ωσαυτως κυριος ο πατηρ, κυριος ο υιος, κυριος το πνευμα το ἁγιον. και ομως ου τρεις κυριοι, αλλ' εις εστι κυριος. οτι ωσπερ μοναδικως εκαστην ὑποστασιν, Θεον και κυριον ομολογειν χριστιανικη ἀληθεια ἀναγκαζομεθα· ουτω τρεις Θεους ἡ τρεις κυριους λεγειν, καθολικη ευσεβεια κωλυομεθα. ο πατηρ ἀπ' ουδενος εστι πεποιημενος, ουτε δεδημιουργημενος. ουτε γεγεννημενος ο υιος, απο μονου του πατρος εστιν· ου πεποιημενος, ου

δε δεδημιυργημενος, αλλα γεγεννημενος εκ τυ πατρος· το πνευμα το αγιον απο τυ πατρος, υ πεποιημενον, υτε δεδημιουργημενον, υτε γεγεννημενον· αλλ' εκπορευτον. εις υν εστι πατηρ, υ τρεις πατερες. εις υιος, υ τρεις υιοι. εν πνευμα αγιον, υ τρια πνευματα αγια. και εν ταυτη τη τριαδι, υδεν πρωτον, η υστερον· υδεν μειζον, η ελαττον· αλλ' ολαι αι τρεις υποστασεις συνδιαιωνιζουσαι εαυταις εισι και ισαι. υτως, ενα δια παντων, ωσπερ ηδη προειρηται, και τριας εν μοναδι, και μονας εν τριαδι λατρευηται. ο θελων υν σωθηναι, υτω περι της αγιας τριαδος νοειτω. αλλ' αναγκαιον δε εστιν προς αιωνιαν σωτηριαν, ινα και την ενανθρωπησιν τυ κυριυ ημων Ιησυ Χριστυ, βεβαιως πιστευη. εστιν υν πιστις ορθη, ινα πιστευωμεν και ομολογωμεν, οτι ο κυριος ημων Ιησους Κριστος ο τυ Θευ υιος, Θεος και ανθρωπος εστι. Θεος εστιν εκ της ουσιας τυ πατρος, προ αιωνων γεννηθεις. και ανθρωπος εστιν εκ της ουσιας της μητρος εν χρονω γεννηθεις. τελειος Θεος, και τελειος ανθρωπος, εκ ψυχης λογικης, και ανθρωπινης σαρκος υποστας. ισος τω πατρι, κατα την θεοτητα, ηττον τυ πατρος, κατα την ανθρωποτητα. ος, ει και Θεος υπαρχει και ανθρωπος, ομως υ δυο, αλλ' εις εστι Χριστος· εις δε, υ τροπη θεοτητος εις σαρκα, αλλα προσληψει ανθρωποτητος εις θεοτητα. εις καθολου, υ συγχυσει φυσεων, αλλ' ενωσει υποστασεων. ωσπερ γαρ ψυχη λογικη και σαρξ εις εστιν ανθρωπος· υτω Θεος και ανθρωπος, εις εστι Χριστος. ο παθων δια την ημετεραν σωτηριαν, και καταελθων εις την αδην, και τη τριτη ημερα αναστας εκ των νεκρων, και ανελθων εις τους ουρανους, και καθημενος εκ δεξιων τυ Θευ και πατρος, τυ παντοκρατορος· οθεν ελευσεται κριναι ζωντας και νεκρους. υ τη ελευσει, παντες ανθρωποι αναστησονται συν τοις εαυτων σωμασιν αποδωσοντες περι των ιδιων εργων λογον. και οι καλα πραξαντες εισελευσονται εις ζωην αιωνιον· οι δε κακα, εις πυρ αιωνιον. αυτη εστιν η καθολικη πιστις, ην ει μη τις πιστως τε και βεβαιως πιστευση, σωθηναι υ δυνησεται.

IN-

INCERTO INTERPRETE.

QUICUNQUE vult ſalvus eſſe, ante omnia opus eſt ut teneat Catholicam fidem: quam niſi quiſque integram inviolatamque ſervaverit, abſque dubio in æternum peribit. Fides autem Catholica eſt, ut unum Deum in Trinitate, et Trinitatem in unitate, veneremur; neque confundentes perſonas, neque ſubſtantiam ſeparantes. Alia eſt enim perſona Patris, alia Filii, alia Spiritus Sancti: ſed Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti, una eſt Divinitas, æqualis Gloria, et coæterna Majeſtas. Qualis Pater, talis Filius, talis Spiritus Sanctus. Increatus Pater, increatus Filius, increatus Spiritus Sanctus. Immenſus Pater, immenſus Filius, immenſus Spiritus Sanctus. Æternus Pater, æternus Filius, æternus Spiritus Sanctus. Et tamen non tres æterni, ſed unus Æternus. Sicuti non tres increati, nec tres immenſi, ſed unus increatus, et unus immenſus. Similiter omnipotens Pater, omnipotens Filius, omnipotens Spiritus Sanctus; et tamen non tres omnipotentes, ſed unus Omnipotens. Ita Deus Pater, Deus Filius, Deus Spiritus Sanctus; et tamen non tres Dii, ſed unus eſt Deus. Ita Dominus Pater, Dominus Filius, Dominus Spiritus Sanctus; et tamen non tres Domini, ſed unus eſt Dominus.

minus. Quia ſicut ſingillatim unamquamque perſonam Deum aut Dominum confiteri Chriſtiana veritate compellimur; ita tres Deos aut Dominos dicere Catholica religione prohibemur. Pater a nullo eſt factus, nec creatus, nec genitus eſt: Filius a Patre ſolo eſt, non factus, nec creatus, ſed genitus: Spiritus Sanctus a Patre *& Filio*, non factus, nec creatus, nec genitus eſt, ſed procedens. Unus ergo Pater, non tres Patres; unus Filius, non tres Filii; unus Spiritus Sanctus, non tres Spiritus Sancti. Et in hac Trinitate nihil prius aut poſterius, nihil majus aut minus; ſed totæ tres perſonæ coæternæ ſibi ſunt, et coæquales. Ita ut per omnia ſicut jam ſupra dictum eſt, et unitas in Trinitate, et Trinitas in unitate, veneranda ſit. Qui vult ergo ſalvus eſſe, ita de Trinitate ſentiat. Sed neceſſarium eſt ad æternam ſalutem, ut incarnationem quoque Domini noſtri Jeſu Chriſti fideliter credat. Eſt ergo fides recta, ut credamus et confiteamur, quia Dominus noſter Jeſus Chriſtus Dei Filius, Deus et Homo eſt. Deus eſt ex ſubſtantia Patris, ante ſecula genitus; homo ex ſubſtantia Matris, in ſeculo natus. Perfectus Deus, perfectus homo, ex anima rationali, et humana carne ſubſiſtens. Æqualis Patri ſecundum divinitatem, minor Patre ſecundum humanitatem. Qui licet Deus ſit et homo, non duo tamen, ſed unus eſt Chriſtus. Unus autem non converſione Divinitatis in carnem, ſed aſſumptione humanitatis in Deum. Unus omnino non confuſione ſubſtantiæ, ſed unitate perſonæ:

ſonæ: nam ſicut anima rationalis & caro unus eſt homo, ita Deus et homo unus eſt Chriſtus. Qui paſſus eſt pro ſalute noſtra, deſcendit ad inferos, tertia die reſurrexit a mortuis. Aſcendit ad cœlos, ſedet ad dextram Dei Patris Omnipotentis, inde venturus eſt judicare vivos et mortuos. Ad cujus adventum omnes homines reſurgere habent cum corporibus ſuis, et reddituri ſunt de factis propriis rationem. Et qui bona egerunt, ibunt in vitam æternam; qui vero mala, in ignem æternum. Hæc eſt fides Catholica, quam niſi quiſque fideliter, firmeque crediderit, ſalvus eſſe non poterit.

THE ATHANASIAN CREED.

"WHOEVER willeth to be ſaved, it is neceſſary for him above all things to hold the Catholic faith, which unleſs he keep whole and undefiled, he will without doubt periſh for ever. And the Catholic faith is this, that we worſhip one God in Trinity, and Trinity in unity, neither confounding the perſons[1] (*proſopa*) nor ſeparating the ſubſiſtence (*ouſia*[2]). For there is one ſubſiſtence (*hypoſtaſis*) of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Spirit: but the Deity of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, is one, their Glory equal, and their Majeſty coëternal. Such as is the Father, ſuch is the Son, and ſuch is the Holy Spirit. The Father uncreated, the Son uncreated, and the Holy Spirit uncreated. The Father infinite, the Son infinite, and the Holy Spirit infinite. The Father eternal, the Son eternal, and the Holy Spirit eternal. And yet there are not three eternals,

NOTE

1. Alludes to the Sabellians, who were ſaid to confound the perſons, particularly Marcellus.

2. Againſt the Arians or Homœuſians, who divided the *ouſia* or ſubſiſtence of the Trinity.

but

but one eternal[3]. In like manner there are not three uncreated, nor three infinites, but one uncreated, and one infinite[4]. In like manner, the Father is Almighty, the Son Almighty, and the Holy Spirit Almighty; and yet there are not three Almighties, but one Almighty[5]. So likewiſe the Father is God, the Son God, and the Holy Spirit God; and yet there are not three Gods, but one God[6]. So likewiſe the Father is Lord, the Son Lord, and the Holy Spirit Lord; and yet there are not three Lords, but one Lord[7]. For as we are compelled by the Chriſtian verity to confeſs each ſubſiſtence (*hypoſtaſis*) individually to be God, and Lord, ſo we are forbidden by the Catholic piety to ſay three Gods or three Lords[8]. The Father is made by no one, nor created, nor begotten: the Son is of the Father alone, not made, nor created, but begotten of the Father: the Holy Spirit is of the Father[9], not made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceed-

3. Becauſe they were *homoouſios* or conſubſtantial, or of one *ouſia* or ſubſiſtence: and the Father was eternal, the Son eternal, and the Holy Spirit eternal, becauſe each of their *hypoſtaſes* was ſo.

4. Ibidem.

5. Ibidem.

6. Ibidem.

7. Ibidem.

8. This is a clear explanation of the whole myſtery.

9. The compoſer of this Creed was not orthodox, as he makes the Holy Spirit to proceed from the Father alone. The Latin tranſlator has made up *the defect*, but without authority from the original.

ing,

ing. Therefore there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons; one Holy Spirit, not three Holy Spirits[10]. And in this Trinity none is firſt or laſt; none is greater or leſs; but the whole three ſubſiſtencies (*hypoſtaſes*) are coëternal and coëqual with themſelves. So that in all things, as already mentioned, both a Unity in Trinity, and a Trinity in Unity, is to be worſhipped. Who, therefore, wiſhes to be ſaved, he ſhould thus think of the Trinity.

"But it is alſo neceſſary for eternal ſalvation, that he ſhould firmly believe the incarnation of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; for the right faith is, that we ſhould believe and confeſs that our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Son of God, is God and Man. He is God of the ſubſiſtence (*ouſia*) of the Father, begotten before the ages; and he is man of the ſubſiſtence (*ouſia*) of the Mother, begotten in time, perfect God and perfect man, of a reaſonable ſoul, and human fleſh ſubſiſting[11]. Equal to the Father with reſpect to his deity, inferior to the Father with reſpect to his humanity. Who, though he ſubſiſts both God and man, yet is not two, but one Chriſt. And one not by converſion[12] of deity into fleſh, but by aſſumption of humanity

10. That is, each of the *hypoſtaſes* was only a Father, or a Son, or a Holy Spirit.

11. Againſt the Arians and Apolinariſts or Synouſiaſts.

12. Againſt the Apolinariſts.

into

into deity. One altogether, not by a mingling[13] of the natures (*phyſis*), but by the union of ſubſiſtences (*hypoſtaſes*). For as the rational ſoul[14] and fleſh is one man, ſo God and man is one Chriſt[15]. Who ſuffered for our ſalvation, and deſcended into hell; and roſe again the third day from the dead; and, aſcending into heaven, ſitteth on the right-hand of God Almighty, even the Father: from whence he will come to judge the living and dead. At whoſe coming all men ſhall be raiſed up again with their bodies; and ſhall give an account of their actions. And they that have done good ſhall go into life eternal; and they that have done evil into everlaſting fire. This is the Catholic faith, which unleſs a man ſhall faithfully and firmly believe, he cannot be ſaved."

13. Againſt the Apolinariſts and Synouſiaſts.

14. The reader perceives that there is no mention of the *anima irrationalis* or ſenſitive ſoul.

15. No alluſion being here made to the Neſtorian hereſy ſhews that this Creed was compoſed before that hereſy was avowedly maintained, that is, before the year 428. It being likewiſe mentioned, that Chriſt had a *reaſonable ſoul*, which had not been determined before the year 374 at Rome, places the date of this Creed between theſe two eras. Perhaps there being no alluſion in it to the Pelagian hereſy, which burſt forth in the latter end of the 4th century, and the Holy Spirit being expreſsly called God, may be thought no weak argument that it was compoſed ſhortly after the firſt general council at Conſtantinople, 381, when the Holy Spirit had been declared to be God. The Pelagian hereſy was probably advanced about the year 390 by Theodore of Mopſueſtia in Cilicia.

The reader ſhould recollect well the diſtinction between *ouſia* and *hypoſtaſes*, the former ſignifying the *ſubſiſtence* or *ſubſtratum* of the whole Trinity, whereas the latter was predicated only of the ſubſiſtence of the three perſons which compoſed the Trinity. Without keeping this diſtinction in his mind, and that the ſubſiſtences, or *hypoſtaſes*, of the divine perſons, were *diſtinct* as *hypoſtaſes*, and united as an *ouſia*, his ideas muſt be confuſed. The difficulty to the Engliſh reader is conſiderably enhanced from our not having *different* terms for expounding *ouſia* and *hypoſtaſes*, but are obliged to render both by *ſubſiſtence*, or the Latin term *ſubſtratum*. The Latins were nearly in the ſame predicament, having only *ſubſtantia* and its ſynonimes for expreſſing both the Greek terms. The Engliſh reader, perhaps, by not reading the words *ſubſiſtence* or *ſubſtratum* at all, but inſtead of them the Greek terms *ouſia* and *hypoſtaſis*, will more eaſily arrive at the object of the compoſer. *Nihil ſine labore.* Without attention and exertion of the mental faculties it is vain to expect the attainment of metaphyſical niceties: but with what I have already mentioned in the beginning of the ſecond part of theſe ſtrictures, and what is here ſaid, I do not conceive that the difficulties of this celebrated Creed are more difficult to the capacity of a child, for ſuch I deem a lad of ſixteen, than the Chapter of Power in Locke's Eſſay on the Human Underſtanding, nor

nor indeed half ſo much ſo, which is a part of a junior freſhman's ſtudy, many of whom exceed not that age, in the univerſity of Dublin. Farther, the reader ſhould remember, that by affirming the *diſtinction* of the *hypoſtaſes*, the Catholics confuted the Sabellians, who denied their ſeparation; and by maintaining *one ouſia*, they confuted the Arians, who, by ſeparating too far aſunder the three *hypoſtaſes*, precluded a oneneſs of *ouſia* or *ſubſiſtence*, or *ſubſtratum*, of the Trinity.

It is alſo evident that the Latin tranſlator knew nothing of the object of this Creed, nor of the force of the Greek terms. His expounding *hypoſtaſis* by *perſona*, inſtead of *ſubſtantia*, and *phyſis* by *ſubſtantia*, inſtead of *natura*, abundantly prove it. That he lived after the eighth century is certain, for ſo long the knowledge of the ſubſiſtencies was retained by the Catholic church.

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TO THE

READER.

THE preceding ſheets have been printed above twelve months, it not being at that time my intention to lay them before the public, until I was prepared to ſubmit to its deciſion thoſe arguments which appear to me clearly to demonſtrate that the Sects which go under the various appellations of *Gnoſtics*, *Simonians*, *Samaritans*, *Nazarenes*, *Valentinians*, *Saturnilians*, *Ptolemæans*, *Baſilidilians*, *Marcionites*, *Manicheans*, *Jews*, *Montaniſts*, *Theodotians*, *Praxeans*, *Donatiſts*, *Sabellians*, *Paulians*, &c. were in fact only different nick-names of the Profeſſors of the ſame opinion concerning Jeſus, differing only in this; that the epithets, Samaritans and Nazarenes, were peculiarly applied to thoſe of the Hebrew nation, who believed that Jeſus was not an impoſtor. If I ſhall be able to prove this to the ſatisfaction of the unprejudiced and liberal enquirer, I apprehend,

that among Proteſtants, all religious controverſy ought to ceaſe in future, it being impoſſible for them to deny, if they keep true to their principles, that the faith of the firſt Converts of Jeſus, as to Eſſentials, was not the true faith. Now what the faith of the Nazarenes was, as to Eſſentials, is no longer diſputed among Proteſtants, with whom in this particular the Catholics alſo agree; namely, that Jeſus was a *mere Man begotten of Joſeph and Mary*, in like manner as other men are begotten of their parents: this faith then muſt conſequently, by Proteſtants, be allowed to be the true faith, in this particular, as being the acknowledged faith of the Hebrew or firſt converts of Jeſus. And indeed, however much Biſhop Horſeley and Doctor Prieſtley may in other reſpects appear to differ, they agree in this, that, in what concerns eſſentials, the Nazarene faith is the true faith.

Another important queſtion here preſents itſelf, namely, what was the opinion of the Nazarenes concerning the books of the Old and New Teſtaments. If I can ſhew, that all thoſe Sects were in fact one Sect only, there will remain no doubt concerning this point: for, Fauſtus the Manichee, in his diſputation with St. Auguſtine, aſſerts, that the books of the New Teſtament were forged *a long time after* the Apoſtles,

to which the ſuppoſed names of Apoſtles, or of the followers of Apoſtles, were prefixed by the forgers, in order to procure their reception among the faithful. Now, that this was the real opinion of the Manichees muſt be admitted, as Fauſtus, knowing that Auguſtine having been himſelf a Manichean, could not poſſibly have had the impudence to have advanced that in controverſy, which his opponent could, from perſonal knowledge, have moſt triumphantly diſproved. That ſeveral of theſe Sects held the Old Teſtament in the ſame light is well known, and not one of them is ſaid to regard any of the Goſpels, as a true relation of the Miniſtry of Jeſus, unleſs we except the Goſpel of Mark, but not in its preſent form; and which I think I have ſhewn was the ſame as *the Goſpel of Peter*, or *of the Egyptians*; its moſt general appellation before it had been altered. But ſhould I ſucceed in proving theſe Sects to have been only different nick-names of one Sect, it will neceſſarily follow, that the unaltered Goſpel of Mark, was the Goſpel made uſe of by them, and of courſe the only genuine relation which remains of that tranſaction; though from what Jerome * has ſaid,

* See p. 22. Preliminary Diſq.

it must be admitted that it has suffered greatly by interpolations.

I am fully aware of the difficulty with which whatever contradicts the general received opinion is received, especially in matters of religion: it being always, and with much appearance of reason, objected in these cases, the improbability of obvious and very important facts lying concealed from the most curious enquirers for several centuries, and at last to be discovered by a person of little learning, and, at the most, of no more than ordinary sagacity: however the concentrating my whole attention to one object at a time, after possessing a tolerable general knowledge of the subject, is the natural and true solution of this difficulty. It may perhaps be added, that possessing a general, though superficial knowledge of manners, customs, geography, chronology, united to an ardent love of truth whithersoever led by it, has enabled me to perceive flaws, and insuperable difficulties, and objections to received tenets, which might not so forcibly have impressed mere Theologians, who, in every Sect, must be sensible of the shackles of their profession, when about to advance whatever might offend the most respectable part of their Society. Be this however as it may, my having discovered the true knowledge concerning the *three sub-*

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ſiſtences in one Eſſence or Subſtratum, as alſo *the Union according to the hypoſtaſis*, which yet remain unknown among proteſtants, ought to be deemed a tolerable earneſt, that I ſhall not diſappoint my readers in what I propoſe farther elucidating; for that which is to follow, though it muſt be allowed to be novel and intereſting, can be deemed no more than childrens play in compariſon of theſe intricate doctrines.

That proteſtant writers of conſiderable learning and acknowledged abilities ſhould venture to treat of the ſentiments of the Fathers without having an accurate knowledge of both theſe doctrines, without which it was impoſſible for them to conceive what the Fathers meant, is a melancholy inſtance of the vanity of *reputed* learning. For, though they may modeſtly deny the incomprehenſibility of the Athanaſian Creed, yet I will venture to affirm, that he who maintains this does not underſtand the Fathers, as I truſt I have evinced by the paſſage quoted from *Vincentius Lirinenſis*: nay, what is more, without this knowledge it is impoſſible for them to underſtand the diſſertations prefixed to the Benedictine Editions of the Fathers. In what contempt ought theſe *dogmatizing* Eccleſiaſtics to be holden, who for upwards of a century have been filling the world with numerous volumes that treat of ſubjects of which

they

they had no adequate idea. At the time I discovered the knowledge of these doctrines I presumed from the ignorance of all the protestant writers concerning them, that I had the merit of a first discoverer: but I was shortly undeceived; perceiving that it had been discovered upwards of a century by *Johannes Garnerius*; and from the perusal of several of the Benedictine and Catholic writers since, I find that his discovery is now well known among all the learned Catholics abroad. But the ignorance of the Catholic *Priests* in this and the Sister Island concerning these doctrines cannot, I think, be otherwise accounted for, than from the caution with which, since their first discovery or invention, these doctrines have been communicated to the faithfull. Any one may easily satisfy himself concerning the ignorance of our Catholics on these points, by examining what the ingenious Mr. Berrington has advanced in regard of the disputations of Abelard. However that our titular Primate is fully Master of them can not be reasonably questioned.

This caution in unfolding such Mysteries which would have subjected the primitive Catholics to the sneers of their opponents, may perhaps throw light upon that difficult passage of Paul to Timothy, in which he enjoins him *to keep that which is committed to thy trust*,

i. e. not

i. e. not to betray the ſecret entruſted to Him. The ſolemn engagement* was it ſeems thought inſufficient without Apoſtolic Authority to enſure due ſecrecy concerning the Myſteries.

An unforeſeen evil, fatal however to the cauſe of Chriſtianity, has been the conſequence of this extreme caution. For, during the dark ages, though I apprehend after the age of Abelard, the tradition concerning the true doctrine of the *Subſiſtencies*, as well as *the Union according to the Hypoſtaſis*, or the doctrine of the Incarnation, was loſt, by which the Aſſertion of Jeſus, *that the Gates of Hell ſhould not prevail againſt the Church*, is diſproved; thus, whether conſidered under the character of a Prophet, and ſtill more as the ſon of the Living God and equal to his Father, his want of *foreknowledge* is evinced by undeniable facts. To avoid this indiſputable concluſion, the learned but wily Jeſuit, the celebrated *Pere Hardouin*, perhaps deviſed his extraordinary notion of the writings of all the Antient Authors excepting ſix having been forged between the end of the 13th century and the taking of Conſtantinople, by the Turks, about the middle of the 15th.

* See p. 398.

By this means this objection to Chriſtianity would have been evaded. But the notion was too extravagant even to have been received among the Catholics, who, perhaps were not aware of its great importance towards continuing the eſtabliſhed ſyſtems of Chriſtianity.

Should any Catholic affirm, that theſe doctrines were not loſt among the Catholics, let him explain how it hath happened that the moſt learned Catholics, before *Johannes Garnerius*, as *Petavius* and *Sirmondes*, than whom no writers were more diligent, were unacquainted with thoſe doctrines, as appears evidently from their expoſitions of the Antients: and that *ſince* the time of *Garnerius* every Eccleſiaſtical Catholic writer of ability and learning evinces a perfect knowledge of them. This I apprehend can not be otherwiſe ſolved than by admitting the facts, which overturns Chriſtianity: or by ſhewing, that though theſe writers were not Maſters of theſe doctrines, yet there were other writers their contemporaries who were; as alſo for the two or three preceding centuries. Though a rigid diſputant might inſiſt on this proof, yet I ſhall be content, and never again urge the objection, if it can be ſhewn that theſe doctrines were rightly underſtood by either any proteſtant or Papiſt Theologian from the middle of the 16th to the middle of the 17th century. When theſe doc-

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trines were loſt I cannot now determine, not having thoſe works at hand which would enable me to form a ſure judgment: but from the entire ignorance of the Proteſtant writers concerning them, I think it may be fairly inferred, that they were loſt before the Reformation. This point I ſhall more fully examine in the third and concluding volume of this work. A more important queſtion cannot in fact be diſcuſſed: for, upon it will depend whether Chriſtianity be a divine diſpenſation or a cunningly deviſed fable.

As theſe doctrines having been held by the earlieſt Fathers of the Church, and according to which they expound the Scriptures; to affirm then that they are of little importance, and the reſult of controverſy, would be tantamount to accuſing the Fathers, many of whom are ſaid to have ſealed the truth with their blood, of direct falſehood, for having conſtantly maintained, that what they delivered as true doctrines, were handed down to them from the Apoſtles or the followers of the Apoſtles: and certainly, without giving up Chriſtianity, we cannot ſuppoſe that they ſhould be all ſuch impudent liars as to uniformly affirm that which was notoriouſly falſe. Moreover, the Fathers on this head are independant witneſſes, as having been contemporaries and reſiding in far diſtant countries, which overturns

any objection which might be urged of their having been inadvertently led aſtray by ſome raſh writers. To attempt to expound Scripture differently from the uniform uſage of the Fathers, for among them there is no material difference in this reſpect, can never be approved of by perſons of ſober Reaſon, as being tantamount to affirming, that the true meaning of thoſe writings, which were moſt bountifully given by the Deity to man for his direction in his moſt important concern, ſhould, nevertheleſs, be ſo obſcurely developed, as not to be rightly underſtood, for upwards of 1000 years, by pious, diligent, and learned men, who applied their whole ſtudy to it. The attempts of ſuch expoſitors, as greatly conducing to the unhappineſs of unlearned and pious individuals, by making them think that Scripture has no fixed meaning, and is capable of being wreſted to ſupport any hypotheſis, which a work coming from an all-perfect God, ought ſurely to be free from, I ſay ſuch attempts ought to be peculiarly diſcouraged: for, independently of what I have alleged, they tend to fill the world with volumes which muſt neceſſarily be erected on a ſandy foundation. Such expoſitors, methinks, ſhould firſt prove that they underſtood Latin better than the Latins, and Greek than the Greeks—that in ſagacity, diligence, and learning they far excelled

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the Fathers—or that they enjoy greater advantages for expounding them. Until they had evinced each of theſe they ſhould not at all be attended to.

The peruſal of Sir William Jones's ingenious Diſcourſes in the Aſiatic Reſearches has been a ſtrong inducement to me to continue this work. I no longer remained doubtful whence much of the Moſaick Syſtem, in reſpect both of his Coſmogony and Civil Inſtitutions, had been taken. This induced me to pay more attention to the ſyſtem imputed to the Gnoſtics by the Catholics, than I had ever propoſed, from its reſemblance in ſome points with the Braminical. The learned Maſſuet being my guide, I quickly perceived the cauſe of the acknowledged obſcurity and difficulty of conceiving the object aimed at in the writings of the Fathers, uſually called *Antenicene*, namely, the want of a thorough knowledge of this Syſtem. The elucidating of it, I conceive, may be uſeful to thoſe who do not think eccleſiaſtical attainments an object of contempt, and beſides reflect ſome light upon the Aſiatic or Braminical Philoſophy.

My third Volume will contain—1. a Developement of the Gnoſtic Syſtem. 2. The true doctrines held by this Sect in reſpect of the Deity, and that the different Sects of Gnoſtics and Humaniſts were only one

Sect. 3. The true Catholic faith as deducible from the writings of the Fathers to the Council of Chalcedon, on the following heads: the Trinity or three Subsistencies in one Essence or Substratum, which were neither *separated* nor *joined* together: by which means they were *three* and *one* at the same time. This I shall shew was the doctrine of the first Fathers, and never questioned before Arius: and which continued to be the Catholic faith till lost in the dark ages. 4. I shall shew that it was the universal opinion of the Fathers, that there was an Oral tradition delivered by Christ to his Apostles; and by them to the Bishops or the presidents of the several Churches, which tradition they held to be equally binding as the acknowledged written word of God. 5. I shall prove that Episcopacy was the Ecclesiastical Polity appointed by the Apostles; under this head I shall offer what appears to me from the perusal of the Fathers to have been the intended Polity. 6. I shall prove against the Unitarians that the early Christians did not take up their notion of a second Deity, called the Theos Logos, the God Word, (not the *Word of God*, as they translate, as well as the writers of the established Church, which is downright Heresy, unless *charitably* understood) the Maker of the World from the writings of Plato, or of his Followers;

for

for this very good reaſon, that no ſuch notion is to be diſcovered either in his, or their works. As to thoſe writings uſually aſcribed to the Junior Platoniſts, they are clearly forgeries of the *Poſtnicene* Fathers. Were there no other proof of this than evincing a retrogreſſion of the Human Mind, without an adequate cauſe, it would be ſufficient for real Philoſophers, who ever combine effects and cauſes. After having ſhewn that the Source of this Corruption among the early Chriſtians is not imputable to the Platoniſts, the Unitarians, if conſiſtent, ſhould abandon their Unity: for, as they juſtly obſerve, could not the ſource of this corruption among the primitive Chriſtians be clearly pointed out, it might *reaſonably* be ſuppoſed, that a *ſtrict* Unity in the Godhead, and the Humanity of Jeſus, were *not* the Doctrines taught by Jeſus and his Apoſtles. 7. I ſhall ſhew that the year of Chriſt's birth, as determined by the Catholics, was the year immediately preceding our Era. In this I agree with Sir William Jones, and with no other writer that I know of. Sir William, however, has not adduced his reaſons for this opinon, which, from his acknowledged learning and ingenuity, will be found, when he lays them before the Public, far ſuperior to what I can pretend to. I ſhall afterwards ſubmit to the Reader what induces me to think that the Author

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of our Religion lived, perhaps, 20 or 30 years before the period fixed on by the Catholics. 8. I ſhall offer thoſe reaſons which induce me to conclude, that all the writings aſcribed to the *Antenicene* Fathers are forgeries of a later age: as alſo that the Works of Philo Judæus and Joſephus are Chriſtian forgeries: to which I may add Pliny's Letters. The ingenious Mr. Semler, in his *Obſ. novæ*, admits, *againſt his will*, that the Letter from Pliny to Trajan, and the Anſwer concerning the Chriſtians, to be forgeries: but they are all ſo. To which add Suetonius, Athenæus, and I doubt not ſeveral others, who are *ſaid* to have flouriſhed between the Acceſſion of Veſpaſian and the Decree of the Emperor Galerius againſt the Chriſtians. The records of this period of hiſtory, perhaps the moſt intereſting the world ever ſaw, as being the moſt improved and of the longeſt continuance over the largeſt portion of the Earth, including all the Countries adjacent to the ſhore of the Mediterranean, have been deſtroyed by the Chriſtians; and with what view is obvious. The breach has, however, been very inadequately filled by the moſt jejune and unſatisfactory relations, or rather with obvious falſehoods, as being in direct contradiction with the nature of Man. The Writers of the Auguſtan Hiſtory are without exception of this claſs. 9. I

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ſhall point out the coincidencies and reſemblances between the Inſtitutions of Moſes and thoſe of the Bramins or eaſtern Philoſophers.

Whatever opinion may be entertained of my ſucceſs in diſcuſſing thoſe points, I doubt not, but that to attempt undertaking to ſhew, that the various Sects of Gnoſtics and Humaniſts were only different denominations of the ſame Sect, will be counted the moſt hopeleſs, perhaps even extravagant. Nevertheleſs I have to ſupport me the expreſs teſtimony of one of the moſt learned and celebrated of the Antients. The DICTIONNAIRE HISTORIQUE alſo informs me that this point has been proved by a Modern Italian Author, whoſe work I have not yet been able to procure: and farther, that the Vaudois and Albigenſes were of the ſame family. If he has really proved all this, he will have evinced *the perpetuity of the faith*, upon which the Catholics ſo ſtrongly inſiſt, and juſtly as Chriſtians: for the Vaudois ſtill exiſt. I apprehend this Author does not include the Donatiſts, but I am induced to include them from its being mentioned in the Decree of the Emperor Galerius, that the Chriſtians, againſt whom it was iſſued, were a Sect, who had departed from the Religion of their *Parents*, *parentum*, γονεων. Had the Chriſtian Sect ſubſiſted for upwards of two Centuries and a half,

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ſurely language conveying ſuch an untruth could not have been introduced in an Imperial Reſcript. Neither is the propriety of the expreſſion cenſured by Euſebius, nor his tranſcriber Nicephorus Calliſti. As I ſee no reaſon for ſuſpecting the truth of this aſſertion, and as entirely according with hiſtoric fact, accounts for the ſilence of the Heathens concerning Chriſtianity, eſpecially its origin, which, whether friendly or inimical, ſhould naturally have arreſted their attention, equally as other Theologic Syſtems. When I hypothetically laid down in my preliminary diſquiſition the commencement of Chriſtianity about the beginning of the ſecond Century, I now find that I ſhould have laid it down at about the middle of the third at the ſooneſt. For this idea I am indebted to Semler. *Obſ. nova.*

Moreover, I entertain very little doubt, if any at all, that the Sect which the Catholics afterwards nicknamed Ebionæans, were the firſt Chriſtians: and that theſe, when they had arrived to the extravagant notion that their Chriſt or their Man-God was in every reſpect equal to the Father, under this degrading appellation ridiculed their former Companions. Some of the Ebionæans believing in the mere humanity of Jeſus, and others in the miraculous conception, together with the humanity, marks a progreſs in their faith tending towards Catholiciſm.

liciſm. The Ebionæans were humaniſt Chriſtians, and in being *Chriſtians* (that is believing Jeſus to be the Chriſt, though perhaps not the Chriſt predicted in the Old Teſtament, as holding it in little eſteem) only differed from the Nazarenes, according to the Catholics.

Farther, I entertain very little doubt that the Hebrew and Samaritan Copies of the Old Teſtament are mere tranſlations, the firſt from the Greek Bible, ſaid to have been tranſlated from the Hebrew by Aquila, Theodotion, and Symmachus; though in fact forged by the firſt Chriſtians or Ebionæans: and that the Samaritan Copy is a tranſlation of the Septuagint, ſaid to have been miraculouſly produced in the reign of Ptolemy; though the Fathers and reputed Jewiſh Authors are not agreed about which Ptolemy: but in regard of the *Miracle* they entirely agree, excepting ſome circumſtances, which, however, do not abſolutely invalidate it, though a more ridiculous tale was never obtruded on mankind. Had Deity miraculouſly interfered to make the ſeventy-two expoſitions accord even to a Letter, it might reaſonably be inferred, that He would miraculouſly guard it from corruption, which it ſhortly ſuffered. The Copy of the Bible made uſe of by the Fathers materially differed from ours. There were not wanting thoſe who affirmed

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that the firſt verſe of Geneſis did not originally belong to it, but was added to ſhew a plurality in the Deity: and certainly the termination of the Hebrew term for God being plural, ſeems to ſhew, that aſſertion is well founded: it being difficult to conceive, if God be *one* and had fore-ordained to declare himſelf to Man through the medium of the Hebrew Language, that he would not have prediſpoſed the inventors of that Tongue, to expreſs Deity in the ſingular number, as I apprehend all other nations do; and which Phraſeology, He muſt have foreſeen, would be adduced as an argument againſt his ſtrict Unity, of which he appears to be ſo jealous.

Perhaps the Reader will think it utterly incredible that ſo many and ſo voluminous works ſhould have been forged! But when he reflects that the Chriſtian Leaders of the fourth and fifth centuries were men of the greateſt learning and unwearied diligence, under the ſtricteſt ſubordination and contending for the Empire of the World—that their flocks were kept in the moſt abject dependence, which was effected by means of inculcating the neceſſity of faith, without comprehenſion—that the keeping from them the knowledge of their abſurd ſecret tenets or myſteries; and the impoſſibility for the multitude ever to be able to arrive at pure truth, which was

overwhelmed

overwhelmed with ſuch a multitude of groſs volumes, compoſed in the *Eccleſiaſtical Jargon** known only to themſelves, will perhaps ſolve the difficulty.

Had our holy volumes exiſted in the firſt, ſecond, or third centuries, why did not the Chriſtians produce them, which would ſhew that the imputed charges of the Heathens were groundleſs, inſtead of the weak and trifling apologies aſcribed to Juſtin M. &c. Semler calls *them exiles, mediocres.* That our ſacred writings were with the utmoſt precaution kept from the publick eye is evident from thoſe Chriſtians being called *traitors, traditores,* who, during the perſecution of Galerius, had delivered them up. What ought to be ſuppoſed of the leaders of any ſect who denied to Government that ſatisfaction which it certainly has a right to inſiſt upon, a candid developement of its principles, but that they are employed in contriving to overturn the eſtabliſhed Government, which *Semler* thinks to have been the caſe with the Chriſtians in the reign of Dioclefian, by attempting to eſtabliſh the Kingdom of Chriſt, whoſe Miniſters they were to be: and that the diſcovery brought againſt them the wrath of an enraged *mild* Government, which they had before experienced according to Euſebius.

* Semler. Nov. Obſ.

What are we to think of the antient records of Chriſtianity, however decorated with the fictitious names of Fathers and Martyrs, though materially diſagreeing upon moſt points, when adducible to the unerring text of Chronology. One telling us of *long Peace* enjoyed and conſequent corruption: another of almoſt *continued* perſecution, notwithſtanding which there were many general Councils; one that the good Pagan Emperors were *not* perſecutors: another that the moſt horrible barbarities were committed under the philoſophic reign of the *mild* Aurelius. And without any reaſon being adduced, we find the Preſident of one Province interfering in the concerns of a neighbouring one: Lyons being the Capital of Celtic Gaul, an *imperial* province governed by a *Proprætor:* Vienne, Capital of Gallia Narbonenſis, a *Senatorian* Province governed by a *Proconſul.* Maſſuet. Diſſ. p. 82. What ſhould we think of the Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory of Euſebius, though ſo highly thought of by thoſe who have not peruſed it, but then is found like Whip Syllabub, without ſubſtance: leaving the reader utterly unſatisfied. This Hiſtory, if it merits ſuch appellation, for Hiſtory ſhould be a regular developement of effects from cauſes, is ſo drawn up, that, without the fraud being capable of being perceived, it is ſuſceptible of interpolations and caſtrations almoſt to

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any degree—a Hiſtory which ſkips over twenty-ſix years, as if nothing important took place within that time, namely, from his mentioning the Manichees to the year 303, when the perſecution under Dioclesian begins—An Hiſtorian who ſays that he only mentions what will redound to the honour of Chriſtianity, and draws a curtain over their vices. Certainly a declaration of this nature ſeems fully to juſtify Semler's notion of the Chriſtians being chiefly engaged at that time in plots againſt Government, if not worſe. But, perhaps, what will appear ſtill more extraordinary, is, that notwithſtanding the jejuneneſs of this Hiſtory, the other writers who followed him, as Socrates, Sozomen, Theodoret, commence their relations in continuation. As theſe writers were indiſputably men of judgment, and who knew in what manner Hiſtory ought to be compoſed, doubtleſs the two former, who were laymen, would, had they enjoyed liberty, or had they dared to incur the wrath of Imperial Bigotry, inſtead of referring us to this moſt unſatisfactory hiſtory for the firſt ages of the Church, have given us one entirely new and more agreeable to appearances, and with fact. But in their time Prieſts directed the Sceptre.

But to prove beyond reply the late date of our ſacred writings, I ſay, had they exiſted in the firſt or ſecond

centuries,

centuries, could the learned Irenæus, a Biſhop and a Martyr, have advanced and founded an argument of ſome length upon it, againſt the Gnoſtics, that Jeſus was near fifty years old when he ſuffered. If ſo, inſtead of ſuffering in the reign of Tiberius, he muſt have ſuffered in the reign of Claudius. The bleſſed Irenæus was the diſciple of the bleſſed Polycarp Biſhop of Antioch, the favourite diſciple of the Apoſtle John, the favourite Apoſtle of his Maſter, the Bleſſed Jeſus. Again Tertullian twice aſſures us, that Saturninus was Governor of Syria, at the time of the enrolment: St. Luke ſays, Cyrenius. Had Luke's Goſpel exiſted when Tertullian was writing, as in its preſent ſtate, could he have been capable of ſuch an overſight. Tertullian, beſides, having been a Roman Preſbyter, *Semler Diſſ.* while reſiding at Rome, ought, methinks, to have come to a certain knowledge of this fact.

But let us for a moment lay aſide our prejudices in favour of our ſacred Writings, and no one could entertain ſtronger than myſelf in favour of the divine origin of the Moſaic inſtitutions, and we muſt then allow, that to affirm there is a *written* word of God is tantamount to delivering over into the hands of Prieſts, the bulk of Mankind, to be deſpotically directed and governed by them. For, as not one in a million is capable

ble of judging whether a writing is two thouſand or more years old, of courſe there muſt be a claſs of men appointed for attending to, commenting upon, and proving the antiquity and divine origin of ſuch pretended writings. The unlearned multitude, from its abhorrence to deception and hypocriſy, deeming it impoſſible that their ſpiritual guides, whoſe ſpecious manners ſeem to warrant moral perfection, can be influenced by ſuch diſcommendable and unrighteous motives, imagine, that when they point out any unfortunate Laick, or of their own order, as a dangerous perſon, whoſe only crime, uſually, is that of unveiling religious fraud or error, and cry out, Heretic, Arch-Heretic, Monſter, away with the Impious, then inſtantly the well-meaning multitude aſſemble, and quickly rid the world, if they can lay hands upon him, of their true friend, who would ſhed more of his blood for them than the whole maſs of Prieſts.

As no one can diſpute the truth of what I have juſt mentioned, ſhould it not bias us in favour of a divine origin of the Nazarene Sect? It had no *written word of God:* its Faith conſiſted in the belief of *one God and a future life, and forgiveneſs to the true penitents.* What was to take place in the future life, was, I apprehend, left to every man's own conſcience; nor could

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it be in better hands for the advantage of the community. Except to man in ſociety a knowledge of a ſupreme Being and a future life does not appear to me to be indiſpenſably neceſſary: this being only neceſſary to reſtrain human actions when Political inſtitutions would fail. Should it be objected, that this Sect had Sacred Writings, as the Goſpel of the Egyptians, I admit, upon the uniform teſtimony of the Fathers, that this Sect had a volume containing a ſhort relation of the Founder of their Faith and his Miniſtry; and though deſignated by the Catholics ſometimes by the appellation of the Goſpel, or *Evangelium*, according to the Egyptians, or of Peter, yet they themſelves could not have ſo entitled it. For the meaning of Goſpel, or *Evangelium*, is good news; what good news? that the Chriſt was come: this Sect then, who did not at all believe in the coming of Chriſt, could not therefore have given their book a name ſubverſive of their faith.

I could wiſh the candid Sceptic would conſider and point out to what other, except a divine, cauſe he can aſcribe the Exiſtence of this Sect, which I have ſo frequently mentioned as branded by the Catholics with the opprobrious names of Gnoſtic, Nazarene, Jew, &c. for holding the rational Doctrines I have mentioned—who ſeparated themſelves from Heathens—from Chriſtians

tians—from Hebrew unbelieving Jews: who were neither Fanatics nor Enthuſiaſts: for ſuch never paſſed their vacant time in peruſing the immortal works, or works that deſerved immortality, of Euclid, of Ariſtotle, of Theophraſtus, and of Galen. Their enemies, the unrelenting Catholic leaders, for their cenſuring them for this, evince themſelves hypocritical Enthuſiaſts, who wiſhed to engroſs true learning, but to deprive their flocks of it, leſt it might be a means of their throwing off the yoke of Faith: and that by baniſhing learning from the world, they might be enabled to eſtabliſh an everlaſting ghoſtly kingdom. And doubtleſs had they kept true to the principles of their Eccleſiaſtical Polity, as I ſhall elſewhere ſhew, they would have eſtabliſhed an everlaſting kingdom of peace, in which, without an extraordinary interpoſition of Deity, the Million in every country would be ſubjected to a few Prieſts. The certainty of accompliſhing this gave riſe to the Prophecies concerning a Millenium and the future peaceful happineſs of Mankind, which, when brought about, would be a farther means of eſtabliſhing their Deſpotiſm, by ſhewing the completion of former prophecy. This Sect beſides were ready to lay down their lives, rather than forego their principles, in which perhaps they differed from the wiſe Heathens, who all held the Divine Unity,

except the Atheiſts or followers of Epicurus. Moreover, this Sect every where *preceded* Chriſtianity, its tenets being profeſſed from the Euphrates to the Pillars of Hercules. To extinguiſh it, *per fas aut nefas*, by force, by calumny, or by lies, was the firſt and grand object of the Catholics. Its numbers, and its being unceaſingly perſecuted after Chriſtianity, or, as Euſebius terms it, *the Kingdom of Chriſt* had poſſeſſed itſelf of the ſceptre, eaſily accounts for this empire becoming the prey of barbarous, ignorant, and of uncivilized nations. Spain and Africa, though populous and wealthy countries, abounding with natural obſtacles againſt invaders, were without difficulty ſubjugated: but then they were filled with perſecuted Manicheans and Donatiſts.

There are two objections of the opponents of Revelation which are not of that great force they think they have. 1. Why revelation came ſo late. 2. Why, inſtead of being limited to one, not communicated to all nations. The firſt proves too much: as it neceſſitates a Revelation to the firſt created *Being* of our Species, which for want of concurrent human teſtimony muſt in courſe of time fall of itſelf, or require to be renovated. Beſides, is uſeleſs if the object of it, the reſtraining our vicious diſpoſitions where laws do not reach, can be attained by other means, as the fear of avenging Deities,

or

or terrors of another life: the first being the consequence of Polytheism, the latter of Theism. But when Reason in her progress had shewn these fears to be vain, the restraint upon human actions gradually lessening with the Progress of Truth, the manners of Mankind ought necessarily to become more corrupt. The Existence of Deity being generally acknowledged would still, however, be some bar to the indulgence of our vicious propensities, as inferring a future state in which the unequal lots of Virtue and Vice of this life would be rectified, by proportionally rewarding the virtuous Patriot or suffering worth. But Epicurus having shewn the fallacy of those arguments adduced to prove the Existence of a Deity, either from the *experienced freedom* of the Human Will, or from *Physical or Moral Evil*, the Terrors of Futurity would have gradually yielded in time to the irresistible force of his reasoning. When mankind then were upon the brink of being swallowed up in the gulf of Infidelity by its becoming the fashionable doctrine of the Lords of the world, communicated in the seductive, manly, and energetic Poesy of Lucretius, then was the time for the communication of divine truth, namely, that *there was a God and a future life*. Both are so connatural to the human mind, that much testimony would not be required to induce the

assent of the majority. The spreading of the sect which held these tenets throughout the Roman world, seems to shew its having been taught and propagated by divine command. For, sensible men, as their studies evince them to have been, are not ambitious of running, *Quixote-like*, through the world, even for the sake of people's souls. Being unable to assign any other cause adequate to this effect, except divine influence, rather than affirm an effect without a cause, I find I must admit it. This theory of the progress of the human mind in respect of religious impressions, from Polytheism to Theism, and from this to Atheism, being supported by historic facts, ought naturally to have a preference to any other, however more ingenious, erected on human speculation. The progress of our minds also, being precisely similar, evinces its truth. Men of profound thought are only capable of being real Atheists. And, as truth and argument will ever prevail when not oppressed and persecuted, to prevent the fatal consequences of Atheism on human Societies, which in the end must have introduced universal selfishness, and depressed every virtuous energy, may, perhaps, not be thought altogether unworthy of divine interposition.

From the *reputed* learning of the reverend Doctor Whitaker, I was induced to take up his view of Arianism,

niſm, lately publiſhed. But, from his calling Doctor Prieſtly a Heretic, and congratulating Biſhop Horſeley, who, as a Sabellian, is as much an Heretic as the other, I thought it was needleſs to throw away time in peruſing a work dictated by party ſpirit or preſumptuous ignorance. Nor was I miſtaken in this ſurmiſe: for, from the Review in the Gentlemans Magazine, for laſt January, it appears, that there is a *new* and peculiar phraſeology of this writer's, which evinces him to be a greater Heretic than either Biſhop Horſeley or Doctor Prieſtley, namely, *God off God*; this expreſſion aſſerts *two* Gods: *off* being a particle of ſeparation. I have peruſed a good many of the Fathers, yet I do not recollect of having met with in any of them, an expreſſion ſo ſtrongly *Arian*: ſo that this *learned* Theologian is of the ſame ſentiment of Arius, againſt whom he is writing. Moreover, this expreſſion militates directly againſt the firſt of the thirty-nine Articles. Strange! that theſe articles ſhould be ſo unknown, and yet ſubſcription to them ſo violently inſiſted upon! But, be it ſaid without offence, I affirm, that all Proteſtants, eſpecially of the Church of England, as well as Calviniſts, are Heretics, which I thus *demonſtrate*. The Catholic Church, from which they ſeparated in the ſixteenth century, was, at that time, heretical, or it was not; if it was heretical,

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then what Jeſus ſaid was not true, *that the Gates of Hell ſhould never prevail againſt her* (the Church); if ſhe was not heretical, then the Proteſtants, for ſeparating from her were *ſchiſmaticks*, for ſeceding from Mother Church without ſufficient cauſe. But from their entertaining undue notions reſpecting the Euchariſt, they muſt alſo be heretics: the antient Fathers maintaining, that the bread and wine in the Euchariſt were the *real* Body and Blood of Jeſus Chriſt, by whoſe incorruptible body, our bodies being nouriſhed, became in conſequence of this nouriſhment capable of immortality and incorruption.

That the *real preſence* was indiſputably the antient Catholic faith, appears from hence. 1. Marcus, the Gnoſtic and Magician, is ſaid by magic art to have converted wine into blood; and, under this form, to have adminiſtered it to his followers. Now, unleſs the doctrine of the *real preſence* was, at that time, (the middle of the ſecond century) the faith among Chriſtians, what could have induced Marcus to perform a miracle of this kind, but ſtill more, that his followers ſhould be eager of participating of ſo diſguſting an aliment. Iren. l. c. 8. Maſſuet, ed. ch. 13.

2. St. Ignatius, who at a very advanced age ſuffered martyrdom in the year 107, in his Epiſtle to the Smyrnæans,

næans, No. 7, says, alluding to the Gnostics, called Docetæ, *they abstain from the Eucharist, because they do not confess that the Eucharist is the flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ.* This shews clearly that the opposite doctrine of the Eucharist, being the *real flesh* of Jesus Christ, was the doctrine held by the Catholics in his time.

3. Justin M. 1. Ap. No. 66. says, *Neither do we take these as common bread nor as common drink, but in like manner as Jesus Christ our saviour, was incarnated through the God-word, and had for our salvation, flesh and blood: in like manner that food, over which thanks are offered by prayer, containing his words, by which our flesh and blood are nourished, we are taught to be the incarnated flesh and blood of this incarnated Jesus.* Is it probable, that Justin, in offering an apology for the Christian faith to an Heathen Emperor, would have asserted such a doctrine, were it not an article of the Christian faith in his time, which, he well knew, must prejudice the Emperor, as well as every other Heathen, against Christianity: it being the universal opinion of the Philosophers, that the *ne plus ultra* of bigotry and fanaticism, would be the eating the God which man worshipped.

4. Gregory Nyssen. Orat. Cat. c. 37. says, *that the bread*

bread ſanctified by the Word of God, and by prayer, is immediately changed into the body of the God Word, as it was ſaid by the Word, This is my body.

5. Irenæus l. 5. c. 3. ſays, *that our fleſh is nouriſhed with the body and blood of our Lord: that our blood is encreaſed by that cup which he confeſſed to be his own* ιδιον, *blood: and our bodies are encreaſed by that bread which he confirmed to be his own* ιδιον *body.* Cyril of Jeruſalem, cat. 22. ſays, *ſince, therefore, Jeſus himſelf declared and ſaid of the bread, this is my body, who ſhall dare hereafter to heſitate, and when he confirmed and ſaid, this is my blood, who ſhould then doubt ſaying, it is not his blood.* Proteſtant writers of every perſuaſion ſpeak much of tropes and figures, when deſcanting on the Euchariſt. Tropes and figures, in a certain ſenſe, may be ſaid to be food of elegantly informed minds, but never yet did I hear of tropes and figures *nouriſhing* our bodies and blood, or *encreaſing* our bodies. To effect this requires more ſubſtantial aliment. Chryſoſtom, Hom. 83. S. 4. in Math. ſays: *Let us therefore every where obey God, and not contradict him, although what is ſaid may contradict our reaſon and ſenſes, ... his word cannot deceive, but our ſenſes are eaſily impoſed on. Since, therefore, the Word hath ſaid, This is my body, let us be perſuaded, let us believe, let us behold it with our intellectual eyes.* Gre-

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gory again ſays, the immortal body of Chriſt, by being eaten and drunk, is mixed in our bowels, and mingled in the bodies of believers—Cyril, ib. *that the body and blood of Chriſt is diſtributed among our members, and that we, by this means, are made one body and blood with Chriſt, and Chriſtophoros.* Juſtin, ib. *with that food, which hath been conſecrated, the fleſh and blood of the incarnated Jeſus, our fleſh and blood is nouriſhed.* Irenæus, ib. *Our fleſh is nouriſhed with the body and blood of our Lord: our blood is encreaſed with the cup, which he confeſſed to be his own blood: and our bodies are encreaſed with the bread which he confirmed to be his own body*, &c. Hence it clearly appears that the doctrine of tranſubſtantiation was the doctrine of the firſt Fathers, nay, of all the Fathers. But it would tire the reader and myſelf to adduce paſſages declaratory of it. If then the writings of thoſe Fathers are adduced as concluſive againſt the Socinian notion of the *mere humanity* of Jeſus, they ought in like manner to be held equally concluſive againſt thoſe who deny tranſubſtantiation. If the writings of the early Fathers evince the *Humaniſts* to be Heretics, in like manner we muſt admit that they equally prove all the oppugners of the doctrine of tranſubſtantiation, that is all the members of the Church of England, and Calviniſts, to be ſo likewiſe.

After theſe clear and concluſive teſtimonies in favour

of the *real preſence*, what Proteſtant will, in future, dare to impute Idolatry to the Roman Catholics for falling down and worſhipping the true body of Jeſus Chriſt, in the Euchariſt? for, the Word being hypoſtatically united to the body of Jeſus Chriſt, wherever it is, there alſo, by virtue of this union, the God-word is *: inſomuch, that, if the Catholics are Idolaters, for worſhipping Chriſt while preſent; ſo alſo was the Apoſtle Thomas, when, being perfectly convinced of the reſurrection of Jeſus, he exclaimed, *my Lord and my God:* as was alſo St. Stephen, *when calling upon God and ſaying, Lord Jeſus receive my Spirit.*

Who will dare, in future, to inſinuate, that this doctrine is a corruption of Chriſtianity? a corruption forſooth! which was avowed by St. Ignatius, who was born about the time of the Crucifixion—who had been taught by the Apoſtles—who was by them appointed Biſhop of Antioch—who ſuffered martyrdom only a few years after St. John—And who maintained this doctrine while on his journey to Rome, where he knew he was to ſuffer the moſt cruel death. If a perſon circumſtanced in all reſpects as was this Martyr, could be ignorant of the truth, or capable of lying, we ſhall ſearch in vain in this life whereon to fix our faith.

* See ſecond of the XXXIX Articles.

From

From the ſame review I find, that this ſtaunch Polemic ſays, that Juſtin M. wrote his dialogue about the year 155. Notwithſtanding, Juſtin himſelf clearly points out the time to be nearly twenty years ſooner: his words are εν τω ιερω καθεζθεντες οι μετα του Τρυφωνος, εμβαλοντος τινος αυτων λογον περι του κατα την Ιουδαιαν γενομενου πολεμου, διελαλουν. "Dia. S. 9. Trypho's friends ſitting on the "other ſide were diſcourſing concerning the war carrying "on in Judæa, one of them having introduced the ſub-"ject." This paſſage proves that this dialogue was written at the fartheſt in the year 136, as it is admitted that this war ended in that year. Moreover, had Juſtin ſurvived the Emperor Adrian eighteen years, could Epiphanius have been guilty of ſuch an egregious miſtake, as to ſay that Juſtin Martyr had ſuffered martyrdom in the reign of Adrian. As the worſhip of Martyrs was eſtabliſhed in the time of Epiphanius, is it to be ſuppoſed that the day ſet apart for the commemoration of Juſtin's Martyrdom would not have been accurately fixed; or the year; or, at leaſt, the reign, in which he was ſaid to have ſuffered martyrdom. Dr. Whitaker alſo affirms, that the Jews held the doctrine of the Trinity, and that they generally continued as late as the beginning of the ſecond century in the faith of their anceſtors, and of all mankind, concerning the Deity of the Logos or Son of God." If this be true, then what Iſaiah ſaid was not true—*Iſrael knew me*

not, underſtood by the Father to refer to the God-Word or Chriſt. Nor what John ſays, "the world knoweth us not, becauſe it knew him not." John 3. 1. This notion being ſupported by Dr. Allix, is of no conſequence in oppoſition to the whole current of the Fathers. Philo Judæus, or the Philoſopher, as Anaſtaſius calls him, teaching a Logos *enupoſtatos*, ſufficiently proves that the writings imputed to this author are Chriſtian forgeries, unleſs we ſay that the bleſſed Jeſus and St. John lied. Neither is the Philopatris a work of Lucian, as Dr. W. ſays; for the author of it, as I have already noticed, was acquainted with the doctrine of a *trinity in unity* not promulgated for a century after Lucian. It is beſides generally admitted not to be a work of Lucian's, on account of the difference of ſtyle.

I confeſs I was not a little ſurprized while peruſing Philo that he held that the Logos was *the Maker of the World:* for, from the motto of Mr. Lofft's anſwer to Dr. Knowles, I concluded that Philo ſupported the Unitarian ſentiment: but it is quite otherwiſe, as the candid and judicious Mangey has invincibly proved. It is with much religious ſatisfaction that I praiſe one Engliſh Divine, though of ſentiments the direct oppoſite of my own.

From the ſame review it appears, that this learned

Divine

Divine thinks Neſtorianiſm and Catholiciſm to be the ſame thing. Like Biſhop Horſley, it might be ſuppoſed that the authority of Dr. Prieſtley and Mr. Gibbon had influenced his better judgment in this reſpect: but the truth is, that our Britiſh Athanaſius, the predeceſſor of Bp. Horſley, the learned Dr. Bull, has miſled theſe two pillars of the eſtabliſhed Church, who, in contradiction to the ſecond of the XXXIX Articles, maintained two perſons in Chriſt. It hence appears that Biſhop Horſley's predeceſſor no more than himſelf knew any thing of the Union according to the Hypoſtaſis.

Let us once more review theſe learned polemics. Dr. Prieſtley, the Ebionæan, has commenced a controverſy againſt the Catholics, without knowing what Catholiciſm is: not being capable to diſtinguiſh it from either Arianiſm on the one hand, nor Neſtorianiſm on the other; or to ſpeak more diſtinctly, he has entered into a controverſy without knowing any thing of the matter.

Biſhop Horſley, ſuppoſing himſelf orthodox, avows himſelf an Heretic, by profeſſing himſelf a Sabellian, and denying the *diſtinct* ſubſiſtencies of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and conſequently denies the firſt of the XXXIX Articles, which ſays there be three Perſons in the Godhead. Moreover, in contradiction to his tenets, he recommends to his Clergy the peruſal of the works of Euſebius, which

teach

teach three *diſtinct* ſubſiſtencies, or Arianiſm; and alſo of Theodoret, which teach that there are *two* perſons in Chriſt, though the ſecond of the XXXIX Articles affirms there is but one.

Dr. Whitaker cloſes the rear, by complimenting Biſhop Horſley for his victory over the Heretic; and at the ſame time makes uſe of language which ſhews that he is more at variance with Bp. Horſley than Dr. Prieſtley is, for the Heretic and his Lordſhip hold a *rigid* Unity: but this ſagacious Polemic maintains the ſubſiſtencies to be *ſo far diſtinct* as to evince himſelf to be an Arian, the oppoſite Hereſy of his Lordſhip, and which alſo militates againſt the firſt of the XXXIX Articles; the Unity of the Deity. But what is ſtill more amuſing, this Divine flatters himſelf that he can remove all difficulties, which is the being confident in his own ignorance; for, though writing againſt Arianiſm, his phraſeology evinces him to be a complete Arian. Let the reader now judge with what propriety ſuch a writer ſhould apply the epithet of Belial to Mr. Gibbon, and then let him condemn me, if he likes, for treating ſuch a dogmatiſer with ſo little reſpect. If his Ordinary be truly zealous *of the faith delivered to the Saints*, he ought to compel him publickly to recant his *God* off *God*, or eject him from among the faithful.

Theodoret,

Theodoret, lib. ii. c. 2. ſays, "The Nazarenes are "Jews, who honour Chriſt as a juſt man, and who make "uſe of the Goſpel which is entitled according to Peter. "Euſebius has mentioned that thoſe hereſies ſprung up "together during the reign of Domitian. Juſtin the "Martyr, and Philoſopher, and Irenæus, the ſucceſſor of "the Apoſtles, and Origen, wrote againſt theſe." Hence it follows that theſe three Authors wrote againſt the Gnoſtics only, therefore the Gnoſtics and Nazarenes muſt have been different names of the ſame Sect: and that the Gnoſtics of every deſcription were, in fact, Unitarians, Maſſuet acknowledges, (See Diſſ. Præ. S. 34—52. for denying the ſubſiſtencies; or, as Irenæus ſays, lib. i. c. 12. they erred by defect. He alſo obſerves, in his preface, that the Heretics *held the ſame language as the Catholics*, i. e. they maintained one God; *though they thought differently*, i. e. they denied his ſubſiſting in three ſubſiſtencies. The real ſentiments therefore of the Nazarenes are then to be ſought for in the writings of Irenæus, Juſtin's Dialogue with Trypho, and the firſt book of Origen againſt Celſus: but more clearly ſtill in the writings of Auguſtine againſt the Manicheans, who, as Gnoſtics, muſt have been Nazarenes. From the numerous appellations this Sect went by, I am inclined to think that it had not aſſumed any,

but

but was distinguished by others agreeably to their prejudices.

Let not the reader imagine that I have made use of intemperate language, when speaking of the primitive Christians. They are more roughly handled by the Protestant, Semler, whose *Novæ Expositiones*, if translated, would be a sure means of doing away a great deal of modern Protestant Bigotry. His Epithets, when speaking of them, are *fanatici*, *subfanatici*, *audet*, & *audebant*. He observes, p. 53, " Irenæus & Tertullianus vel statuam uxoris Loti quolibet mense signum muliebris naturæ continuare, scribere audent..... Civitatem novem de cœlo per dies 49 suspensam summo mane, vel a militibus (Christianis) visam describere audet Tertullianus." To which I could add a very long catalogue of miracles equally important. Cyprian's account of the morals of the Christians in his time is such as ought to be expected from persons accustomed to lectures from Hermas.

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[illegible] [illegible]

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